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INSIDE **MUSCLE & FITNESS** UK

AUGUST 2019

IN EVERY ISSUE

6 FROM THE CEO
140 IN THE NEWS
146 HOT BOD

COVER STORY

8 Rob Lipsett's Push Day

Smash your delts, chest and arms with Rob Lipsett's ultimate push day workout!

MALE MUSCLE

18 Burn Fat Fast!

When it comes to burning fat you don't want to hang around! Blast your full body with this speedy yet effective workout from top trainer Dan Tai

22 Perfect your V-Taper

Hit this back, traps and abs workout to sculpt an impressive v-taper and round off your physique

30 The Strongman Moves that are NOT for Wimps!

Leave your ego at the door and throw some weight around with proper form

38 Train Wild!

An insight into wild training with James Griffiths, who's recorded the highest altitude workout ever and completed 1000 24kg kettle bell snatches in under an hour!



PHOTO: SIMON HOWARD

ON THE COVER: ROB LIPSETT / PHOTOGRAPHY: EVAN DOHERTY



INSTAGRAM: @EVANDOHERTY

44 5 Exercises to Master for Calisthenics Beginners

Want to pull off the perfect human flag for the gram? These moves take some serious practise, but thankfully the experts at Gravity Fitness are on hand to show you how to get started

46 Buddy Up!

Improve your strength, flexibility and skill set with this partner assisted acro yoga workout from top specialists Sarah Dennis and Nathan Nelson

FEMALE MUSCLE

52 Bod Watch

Step outside and sculpt a beach bod to be proud of with IFBB Bikini Pro Janet Layug's bod watch workout!

58 Cap It!

Capped shoulders are a necessity if you really want to complete your physique. Follow this essential shoulder routine from IFBB Pro Rhea Gayle

64 Bodyweight by Beau

Lever on up! With this signature static hold led by calisthenics whizz Tori Beaumont

70 Wheels on Fire

If you want better legs and glutes, you better be prepared to work for them! Give this tried and tested workout a go to achieve a coveted bubble butt with a shapely set of pins

FEATURES

78 Win a Photoshoot

Win a photoshoot with top fitness photographer Jody Wright!

80 Muscle & Fitness HERS Loves...

Freddy Leggings! The latest to die for range from the Freddy crew

82 Vaser Liposculpting Transformed my Body

43-year-old mum of four Melissa Marshall tells how vaser liposculpting helped her to regain the body she had in her 20s

86 *Real Life:* Paralysed to Galvanised

James Ward was seven when he was diagnosed with meningitis. Paralysed from the neck down, he has since gone on to overcome a series of challenging physical and mental obstacles in order to become the best version of himself

90 Inspector Gadget

The best new fitness gadgets to hit the market, as chosen by Muscle & Fitness

96 Ask the Sexpert

Learn why cheaters never prosper, with **M&F** resident sexpert Komie Haghighi

NUTRITION

98 Fodmapping for Bodybuilders

Get your gut onside to maximise lean muscle growth, muscle size and muscle density

102 Prep Kitchen

Turn your tastebuds to these delicious macro-friendly recipes from Prep Kitchen

106 Food Swaps to get Swole

Implement these simple yet effective food swaps for effortless muscle gain and fat loss



108 Peanut Butter Recipes

Peanut butter dishes to warm the soul and make you swole. You butter believe it! Check out these tasty treats from Meridian Foods

113 What's in your Diary?

Creator of the Crockfit app and former M&F cover star Alex Crockford shares the diet that's responsible for his insta-famous physique...

FLEX

114 Dead Easy

Is your deadlift on point? Former WSM Jon V Williams breaks it down with the help of his good friend, deadlift world record holder Benedikt Magnusson

124 Milos Sarcev

Meet the man behind the physique, with over 20 magazine covers to his credit, titles in numerous countries and the record for entries into bodybuilding contests at 72

132 The Rebuild

FLEX caught up with Phil 'Titanium' Roberts to find out how his training is progressing since his leg shattered clean in two at a live strongman event

138 Rising Star from the East

Up-and-coming Ukrainian Yaroslav Verba is tipped for greatness after topping podiums back-to-back this year. FLEX sent in resident columnist Vincent Prado to get the low-down on what makes him tick **M&F**





JUST DO IT...

You can achieve anything that you put your mind to, it's as simple as that! There are countless examples of people doing incredible things, just because they took that first step and then never gave up until they reached their goal. I try and keep this at the forefront of my mind, but it's not easy to think this way... our environments are so often geared to stop us taking that jump. Naysayers are plentiful and the risk of stepping outside of the comfort zone is a scary thought for most of us. People love to talk ideas down; they like to point out the risks and they revel in highlighting the challenges that you will face.

Negative comments sit heavier than positive ones, and so the pressure on us to stay in line and not break ranks is real and tough to deal with. Mental strength is everything if you

are going to reach over the line that society has drawn for you...

I know that for myself, doing that thing which starts as a brainwave, is worth the risk. I've done it many times, but it doesn't get easier to take the first step. My most recent big step is to follow up from a movie that I was executive producer of, called 'Generation Iron 2'. I enjoyed the process enough to know that I wanted to write my own feature length movie (Generation Iron is known as a 'docu-film', almost like a series of interviews put together to a broad storyline, so differs from a feature movie, where you need actors to play the parts), but it's a huge step.

It's taken me two years to take the plunge and get the script written, even though I'm confident that I can make this movie a hit (it's a Bollywood style production, aimed

at an Indian market). Every time I went to start the process, something got in the way, and when you are taking a risk, and putting yourself into uncharted waters, it's easy to find a reason not to continue... so two years later, I have actually taken that first step. I have a long way to go with this project, and I know there will be challenges along the way, but I'm driven by the thought of making something that inspires others, and so I'm just doing it!

If you're like me and you have ideas in your head, but can't seem to take that first step, don't let that define your future. You can achieve anything you put your mind to... just do it. **M&F**

Nick Orton

CEO BodyPower

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Founder and Chairman Emeritus JOE WEIDER (1920–2013)

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Rob Lipsett's **PUSH DAY**

**SMASH YOUR DELTS,
CHEST AND ARMS WITH
ROB LIPSETT'S ULTIMATE
PUSH DAY WORKOUT!**

FAST FACTS

Age: 27

Height: 174cm

Weight: Average approx 165lbs
(varies with bulking/ cutting cycles)

Body Fat: -10%

Fave body part to train: Shoulders

Idol: Mark Wahlberg,
Joe Rogan or The Rock

Fave cheat meal: Pizza,
Sushi, Fro-Yo. In that order!





PHOTOGRAPHS: EVAN DOHERTY

BY DANNI LEVY

PHOTOGRAPHS: EVAN DOHERTY

You have over 1/2 m followers on Insta! How did this come about? Did it all start with your YouTube channel?

The first thing I ever started out on was Facebook actually! From there I moved onto YouTube and then Instagram. I think Instagram is an amazing platform and I use it everyday, but you can get a much better idea of what someone is actually like from a video rather than just a picture, which is why I think YouTube is so powerful; not only for providing informative content, but also for building a connection with your audience. So, my largest following might be on Instagram, but I really value my YouTube channel as it is certainly not easy to build up but it's so rewarding.

How long have you been training/ into fitness and was it always your dream to find fitness fame? How did you become so successful?

I'm not sure I'd consider myself famous or as a celebrity! I'm not an actor or a rockstar, just a guy who loves fitness and creating content.

In terms of success I've still got so far to go and so much to achieve until I would consider myself a success. It's a good feeling though, this mindset keeps me going. I'm happy when I reach a goal or a milestone but I'm always pushed to keep going and levelling up.

Every time we speak to you you seem to be travelling! Do you spend your life on the beach?... (Jealous much)

As much as I love Ireland, the weather isn't the best so I try to travel as much as possible! I think good weather definitely helps when you live an active lifestyle, it also keeps content fresh and engaging. People online don't want to see you're always in the same place doing the same thing, you have to keep it engaging.

What are you working on at present? Any secrets you can let us into?

I try not to speak about things until they're done, but there is another Raw Gym currently being opened and I'm doing some more writing! I'm always up to something and sometimes I take on more than I can handle, which is something I need to be more wary of.

What are your goals for the future?

Same as day one- I want to positively impact as many people all over the world as much as I possibly can. I think the best way for me to do this is by helping people to improve their fitness, mindset and overall lifestyle, so that's what I'll continue to do. It has been a goal of mine to get on the cover of Muscle & Fitness ever since I started lifting. I'm kind of in awe right now even doing this interview. So thank you!





PUSH DAY: SHOULDER EMPHASIS

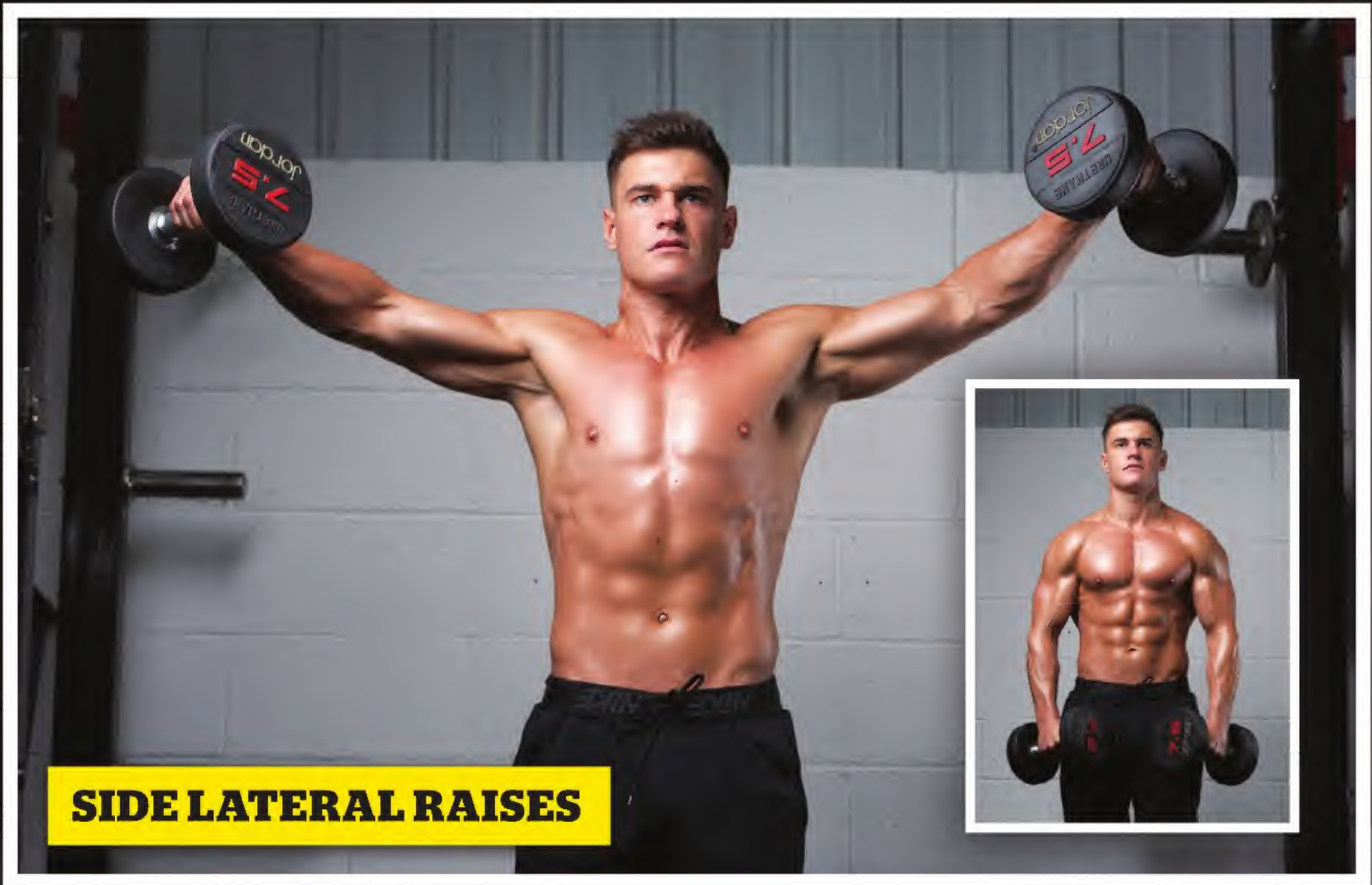
EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	REST
OVERHEAD PRESS	3	8	120 seconds
DUMBBELL BENCH PRESS (FLAT)	3	8	120 seconds
INCLINE BARBELL BENCH	3	10	120 seconds
SIDE LATERAL RAISES	3	10 (25% Dropset on the last set)	60 seconds
CABLE FACE PULLS	3	12	60 seconds
CHEST FLYES	3	12	60 seconds
OVERHEAD TRICEP EXTENSIONS	3	10 (25% Dropset on the last set)	
TRICEP PUSHDOWNS	3	TO FAILURE	



**DUMBBELL BENCH
PRESS (FLAT)**



INCLINE BARBELL BENCH



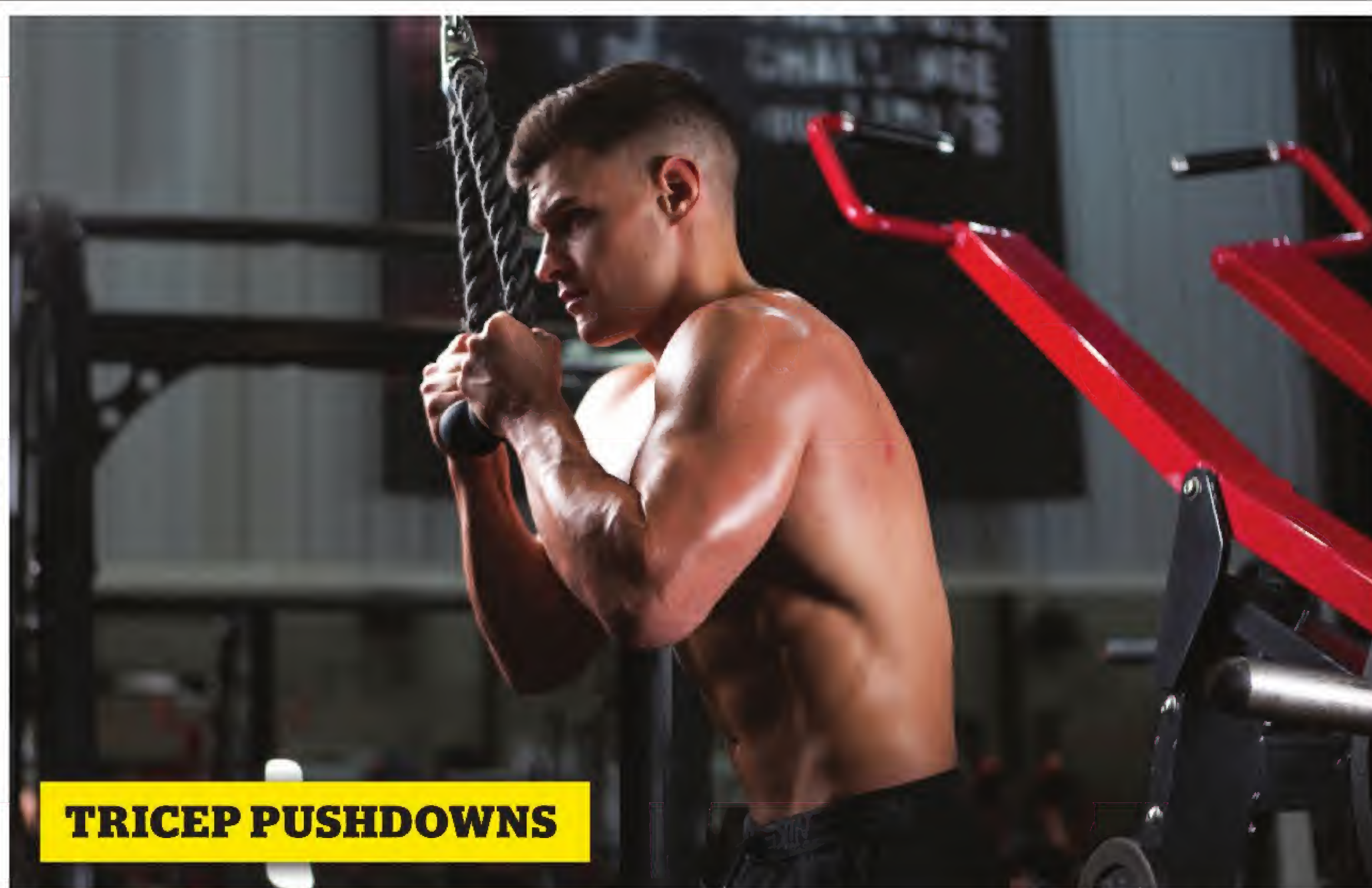


CHEST FLYES



PHOTOGRAPHS: EVAN DOHERTY

**OVERHEAD TRICEP
EXTENSIONS**



TRICEP PUSHDOWNS





ROB'S DAILY DIET

Breakfast: Tuna and egg whites

Post-Workout Smoothie:

2 scoops whey, almond milk, ice, frozen banana, peanut butter

Lunch: Burrito Bowl (ingredients below)

- Chicken breast
- Brown rice
- Mixed salad
- Onions
- Peppers
- Sweetcorn
- Salsa
- Non-fat cottage cheese

Snack: Protein bar and bowl of oatmeal

Dinner: Stir Fry (ingredients below)

- Lean diced beef
- White rice
- Mixed green veggies
- Cashews
- Soy sauce

**FOLLOW ROB AND KEEP UP-TO-DATE
WITH HIS WORKOUTS AND CONTENT AT:**

INSTAGRAM: @ROBLIPSETT

@RAWGYMSDUBLIN

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PHOTOGRAPHS: EVAN DOHERTY

INSTAGRAM: @EVNDOHERTY

BURN FAT **FAST!**

When it comes to burning fat you don't want to hang around! Blast your full body with this speedy yet effective workout from top trainer Dan Tai.

SQUAT JUMPS



A1

Begin with your feet shoulder-width apart. Aim to jump as high as possible so when you start to squat down, make sure you don't go too low. There isn't a set depth for this, but make sure you are always above parallel. I prefer to go to about a 1/4 squat depth. Make sure your feet are flat on the ground and your knees don't cave inwards. Your back should also be flat.



A2

As you begin the ascent, make sure you keep your chest upright and push away from the floor with your feet.

For this variation of squat jump, keep your hands together in front of you so as not to use them for momentum in a swinging motion.

PHOTOGRAPHS: **SIMON BARNES**



A3

When you're in the air, make sure your hips and knees are fully extended with your chest upright. Your body should be straight by now and shouldn't be leaning to one side. As you land, make sure you bend your knees to absorb the pressure and go straight into the next repetition. Aim for between 30 to 60 seconds of these making every rep as high as you can go.

B1

MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS



Begin in the press-up position with your hands directly underneath your shoulders and elbows locked out.

Make sure your back is flat and your core is tucked in.

B2

Keeping your back flat, bring your right knee up towards your chest. As you do this, make sure your knee stays underneath your body and doesn't go out to the side. You also want to make sure that your hips stay level during this movement. When doing this, ensure that neither your knee or foot touch the ground when you drive it up. This will engage your abs and hip flexors.

B3

Once your right knee is up, return it back to press-up position before doing the same with your left leg. A more advanced version of this is doing it in a running motion where there is only one foot on the floor at one time. When doing this, you are aiming to go as fast as you can. Once again, I go for 30 to 60 seconds of this.

C1



BURPEES

Start at the bottom of a press-up, with your chest and thighs on the floor.

Make sure you keep your hands next to your chest and your head neutral.

C2



From here, push-up with your arms and keep your back straight until almost at the top of a press-up. Then, jump your feet in towards your hands. In the same motion, your hands should leave the floor and you should be in a quarter squat position with your back flat.

BY: **DAN TAI**

INSTAGRAM: **@DANTALPT**

PHOTOGRAPHS: **SIMON BARNES**

C3



From here, much like the squat jump, begin to push the floor away and extend your body as you jump. To complete a burpee, the hands must be above the head and hips locked out. Make sure you bend your knees to absorb the impact when landing and return down to the floor the same way you got up. A variation of the burpee to make it easier would be to step in and out of the bottom position. Repeat this for 30 to 60 seconds and complete as many reps as possible. **M&F**

After performing all three of these movements for your chosen time, repeat the circuit three times for a beginner and five times for advanced. Try to make sure that you keep the number of reps roughly the same during each round. Good luck!

BUILD YOUR BACK

6 Reasons Your Back Workout Lacks!

Want a back to leave the rest behind? Implement these top 6 tips to build size and shape and improve posture.

1) Your technique is wrong

When working on back days there are other muscles (synergists) that will try to take over as the primary muscle in these movements (biceps/ delts), which is why you should always try and focus on isolation to target the muscles you want to work, and not the muscles that want to help.

2) You're rushing things

Don't rush your reps! Quality over quantity. Five perfect reps are a whole lot better than 15 sloppy ones. If you can't get a good 1-2 second contraction with each rep, lower the weight slightly and focus on your tempo.

3) Your pull-up technique is poor

These are a major key for a bigger back. Pull-ups can be done virtually anywhere (anywhere sturdy that is). My aim with pull-ups is never to just bang out a quick ten and then move onto the next exercise...

My rules are simple: Ensure full extension of the arms at the bottom of the movement. Pull your chest up and squeeze at the top part of the movement. **Tip:** The lat pulldown is a great alternative if your pull-up strength isn't quite there yet.

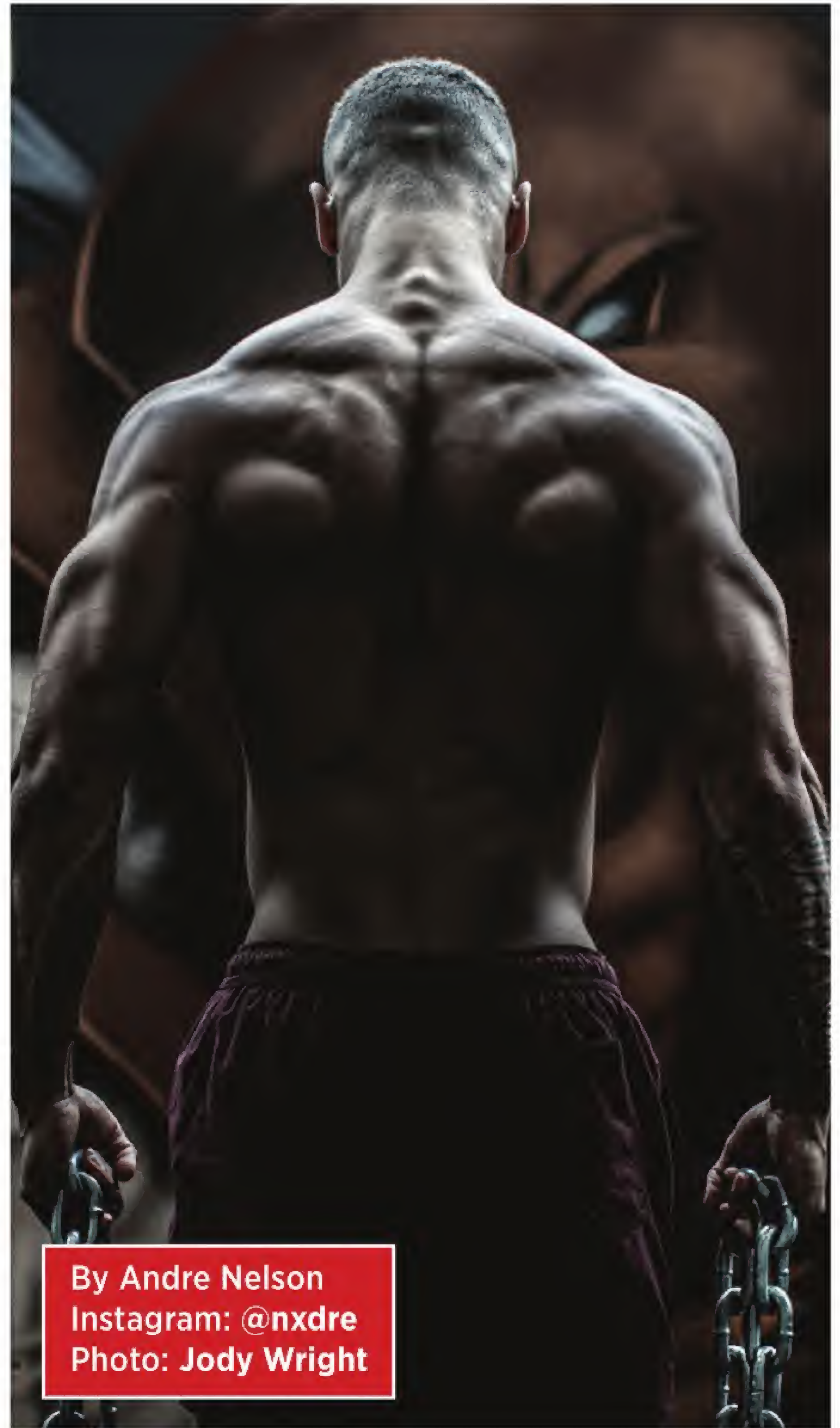
4) You're not performing rows

Barbell rows should be one of the main weapons in your arsenal. This exercise targets your back, lats, rhomboids and traps. Increasing your strength in these areas improves your posture and spine stability, reducing the risk of lower back injury.

5) You're confused over deadlifts

There is always a huge debate surrounding whether you should incorporate these on a back day, or save them for leg day.

The answer is simple... Do them when YOU want to do them. Deadlifts are a huge compound movement working your back, glutes and legs. In fact, they're one of the most effective exercises for building core strength which supports all other major muscle groups.



By Andre Nelson
Instagram: @nxdre
Photo: Jody Wright

6) You're not fuelling your workouts correctly

My last tip is one for outside of the gym. It is crucial to make sure you've got your nutrition on point for what you're trying to achieve.

You want to build a bigger back? Fuel it, feed it!

Pre and post-workout nutrition will fast forward any progress made as opposed to just weightlifting alone.

(Carbohydrates + posterior workouts x stronger lifts = bigger back)

...Now that's an equation we can all get our head around! **M&F**

BY TOM DAY

Age: 27

Height: 185.4cm/ 6' 1"

Stage weight/ body fat:
98kgs/ approx. 6%

Off-season weight/ body fat:
120kgs/ approx. 20%

Instagram: @trainingdayltd

www.trainingdayltd.co.uk

Perfect Your V-Taper

Tom Day is a body transformation specialist and competitive bodybuilder. He has worked as a transformation coach for nine years, helping hundreds of people reach their goals.

"I started off my journey weighing only 60kg," says Tom. "It wasn't until the passing of my father that I found comfort and happiness in the gym. From that point on, I studied

religiously and transformed myself. I have suffered many setbacks along the way, I almost died from a strangulated hernia. The operation didn't go smoothly and I have nerve damage to this day. I went from 100kgs to 70 in 12 weeks. But I never gave up and it forced me to adapt and overcome adversity! I recently lost 22kgs in 14 weeks for a bodybuilding competition, it's amazing what you can achieve with the right knowledge and good willpower."

PHOTOGRAPHS: HARPENDEN STUDIOS

TOM'S WORKOUT SPLIT

MONDAY	Back/ Hamstrings/ Glutes
TUESDAY	Chest/ Shoulders/ Triceps
WEDNESDAY	Quads/ Hamstrings/ Calves
THURSDAY	Back/ Traps
FRIDAY	Biceps/ Triceps



PHOTOGRAPHS: HARPENDEN STUDIOS

WORKOUT TIP: *Rest-Pause*

Rest-pause is an intensifying technique that can greatly increase strength and hypertrophy. Not only this, is it helps burn a significant number of calories due to the output required. This makes the rest-pause method a great option whilst dieting to simultaneously maintain strength and grow muscle. One set becomes several mini-sets, with a short rest in-between.

To Perform a Rest-Pause Set:

1. On your final set, pick a weight to take you to failure within 8-10 reps.
2. Stick to that weight and once you've hit failure, take 15-20 seconds break and go again.
3. Perform 2-3 pauses like this without dropping the weight, working to complete failure.

I like to use a lot of rest-pauses during the first phase of a diet, when calories and energy are higher. As the diet progresses, I will reduce the amount I use this technique, but still keep it in every workout.



BACK/ TRAPS/ ABS WORKOUT

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	REST
WIDE GRIP PULL-UPS	3	8-10	60 seconds
T-BAR ROW	3	8-10 <i>(last set rest pause)</i>	90 seconds
BARBELL BENT OVER ROW	3	8-10	90 seconds
MACHINE LOW ROW	3	8-10 <i>(last set rest pause)</i>	90 seconds
BARBELL SHRUG	3	10-12 <i>(last set rest pause)</i>	90 seconds
ROPE CRUNCH	4	10-12	60 seconds
DECLINE WEIGHTED SIT UPS	4	10-12 <i>(last set rest pause)</i>	60 seconds



WORKOUT TIP: *Stubborn Body Parts*

Higher frequency on stubborn body parts can lead to quicker growth. Training a body part more than once a week gives

you an extra chance to grow the muscle. Back is such a large muscle group, I believe we need to hit it twice a week. My back used to be a lagging body part for me, but I've really brought it up. I use different angles to activate the entire back. I'll do one workout focusing on rowing movements, and another on pulldown movements.

TOM'S CUTTING DIET

Non-Workout Day:

Meal 1: 200g egg whites,
3 chicken sausages, spinach

Meal 2: 180g chicken,
½ avocado, salad

Meal 3: 180g 5% fat steak mince,
green beans

Meal 4: 180g chicken,
200g sweet potato, broccoli

Meal 5: 250g Greek yoghurt,
100g mixed berries

Meal 6: 2 scoops whey isolate,
20g peanut butter

Workout Day

Meal 1: 100g oats, 1 banana,
2 scoops whey isolate

Meal 2: 180g chicken,
250g white potato

Meal 3: Pre-workout: 2 rice krispie squares,
1 scoop whey isolate

Intra-workout: 20g EAAs,
50g cyclic dextrin,
5g creatine,
5g creatine

Meal 4: Post-workout: 2 scoops whey isolate,
1 cinnamon bagel and jam

Meal 5: 180g chicken,
80g basmati rice

Meal 6: 180g white fish,
green vegetables

DIET TIP: Timed Carbohydrates

Consuming fewer carbohydrates on non-workout days and more on training days can improve performance and muscle gain. Carbohydrates around the workout window will help increase muscle recovery, glycogen replenishment and nutrient delivery. This is particularly true of simple carbohydrates which are used easily by the body for energy. They also help release a large insulin spike, which can promote muscle growth.

Low-carb days are reported to switch the body over to a predominantly fat-based energy system, which may improve the body's ability to burn fat as fuel. I keep my carbs lower on days I don't train, as carbs are easy fuel for the body to use. When glycogen levels are lower, the body uses fat more efficiently. I then up my carbs around training, choosing fast digesting ones for energy, muscle growth and recovery. I also increase my fat intake on non-training days to replace the energy lost by dropping my carbs. **M&F**

The STRONGMAN MOVES that are NOT for Wimps!

BY DANNI LEVY

Leave your ego at the door and throw some weight around with proper form.

Strength and Conditioning Coach James Crossley, aka Gladiator Hunter trained all-round dare devil Ross Edgley to educate him on the fundamentals of Strongman training.

“It may come as a surprise to some that strongman exercises don’t have to be used purely for strength,” says James. “Of course you wouldn’t perform all of these moves in one workout, but given the wide spectrum of techniques and muscles used, I taught Ross the form required in these lifts in order to improve his endurance as well as build extra build some extra strength for his UK swim.”



PHOTOGRAPHS: SIMON HOWARD



These exercises can be done individually or as a circuit. With proper programme design they can be the perfect addition to build strength, improve endurance and torch fat in both men and women.

The key with these exercises is the way in which you design the programme to get the best results for your individual goals. Exercise selection, rest periods, reps, tempo and sets will all change depending on the results you are after.

One thing you will find is that Modified Strongman movements are a fun variation from regular gym movements.

Here are a mix of exercises that are a great addition to any strongman/strongwoman style workout.



DEADLIFTS

The number 1 all-round body movement for strength and power
5 sets of 5 reps



SINGLE ARM DB PRESS

A great unilateral movement to iron out weaknesses between the left and right side of the body

3 sets of 8-10 reps

LOG PRESS

A traditional Strongman movement using the full body as well as explosive shoulder, hip and leg power

4 sets of 5 reps



FARMER'S HOLD

A great move to improve grip strength and focus. This also works the traps and upper-back. Ross and James practised timed holds

3 x 30 second holds

ATLAS STONE TO SHOULDER

Ross and James kept the reps fairly high, working on speed, explosive power and conditioning, but this move can be used for strength building too with different weights and rep ranges

3 sets of 10-12



PHOTOGRAPHS: SIMON HOWARD

HUSAFELL WALK

Works your core strength, back and arms
4 x 30m

TYRE FLIPS

Great for conditioning!
Ross and James went “I go you go” for 75 seconds
3 x 75 seconds

BARREL LOADING

A great challenge, combining strength with conditioning, plus can be competitive

4 barrels x 3 sets. This was a 15m run before placing the barrels on a 52 inch platform



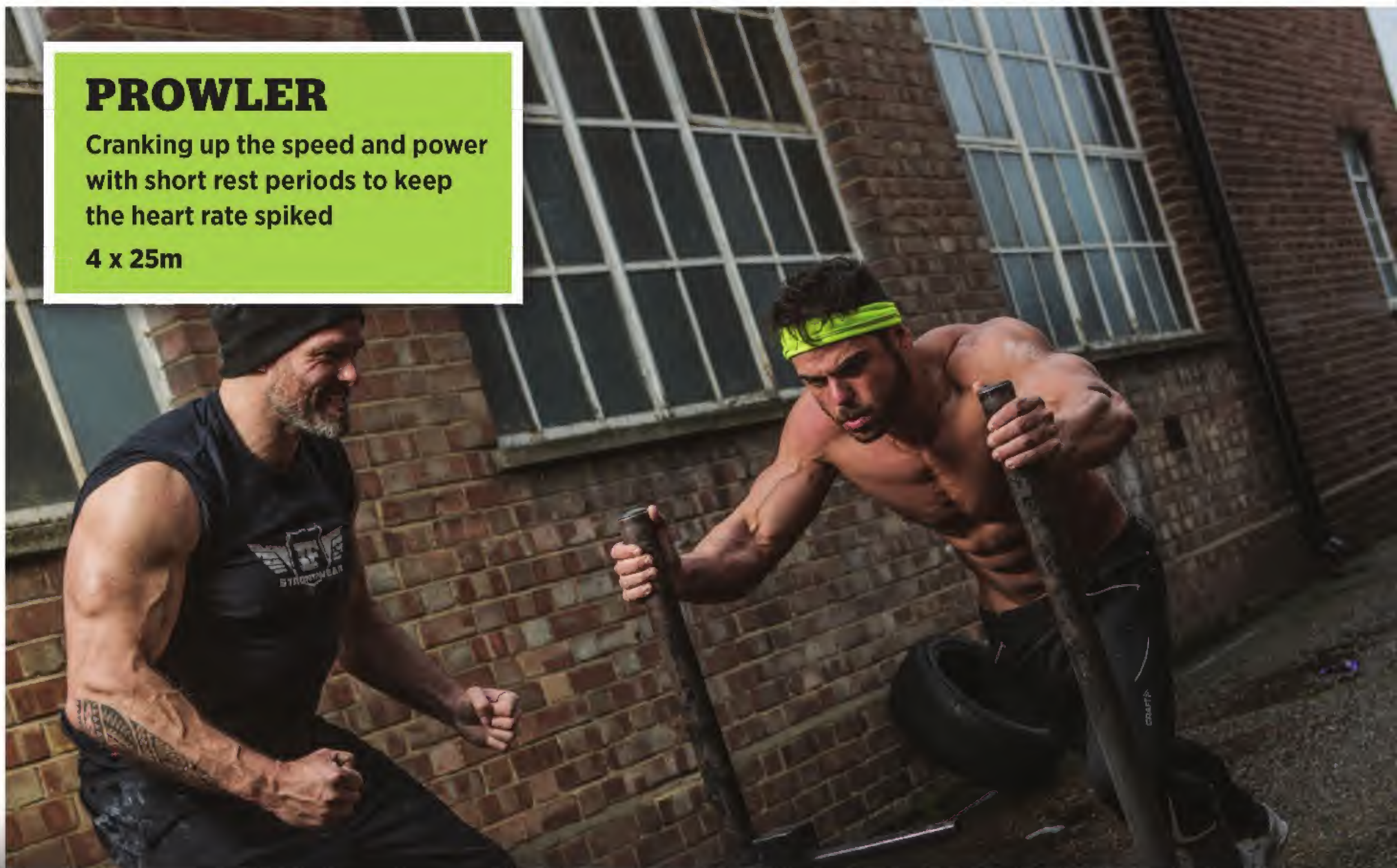
YOKE WALK

Great for core, leg and back strength, as well as building fitness

4 x 30m

PROWLER

Cranking up the speed and power with short rest periods to keep the heart rate spiked
4 x 25m



TYRE DRAG

Another great addition for conditioning and fat burning
4 x 30m



James is wearing: www.ifstrongwear.com

Contact James: www.fitat40plus.co.uk

Photography: Simon Howard

With thanks to:

www.definitionnutrition.co.uk

www.iamthecaveman.com **M&F**

TRAIN WILD!

A Life With No Limit

BY JAMES GRIFFITHS

“A life with no limit” is James Griffiths’ creed. He’s recorded the highest altitude workout ever, completed 1000 24kg kettlebell snatches in under 1 hour and was 2018’s Southern England’s strongest man under 80kg. His obsession isn’t with his own fitness - everything he’s done is about learning how to help others push past their limits. Wild Training, which James founded, is all about sharing the joy of health and fitness in unique ways that challenge traditional norms.



PHOTOGRAPHS: SIMON HOWARD

WILD
Training

GENE
GYM



AERIAL STRAPS

Aerial straps are a type of free-form gymnastic equipment commonly seen in circus performance. Originally a Chinese speciality, modern aerial straps performance was pioneered by the Panteleenko brothers and their acrobat coach Vladivien Levshin.

Training on straps feels similar to Olympic rings, yet there are a lot more options as to how you can test and express your strength and flexibility.

Locking yourself onto the straps is the first step, by either using a loop that goes around your wrist which you grip hold of,

or using a technique called a Chinese lock, which wraps the straight part of the cotton/nylon web around your wrist and hand.

Once you are locked onto the straps you can work through all kinds of lifts, holds, twists, rolls, spins and swings. The really impressive stuff is where two people work together on a single pair of straps to hit doubles action.

I've benefited from training with aerial straps, which includes a tremendous increase in shoulder mobility and overall strength. The control needed for all the movements and the instability of the straps makes them an incredible way to improve core strength, I noticed my oblique strength go to another level with movements like meat hooks and side planches.



Training

PHOTOGRAPHS: SIMON HOWARD



WILL
Tr



How to:

SINGLE ARM STRADDLE SIT:

This is a great movement for strengthening hip flexion and abdominal strength. After setting up a Chinese lock above your head, slowly take your weight off your feet. The trick to this hold is keeping your shoulder active while your arm is straight. Pull down through your lats while turning out your shoulder. To regress it bend your knees. Ideally you want to straighten your legs and turn out your knees, so your ankles point up towards the ceiling.

SUPPORT:

The support is a key position to nail so that you can progress to other skills. It builds good shoulder stability and chest strength. Hold the loop of the strap and then wrap the strap over your knuckles to create a false grip position. After popping up, lock your arms with your shoulders turned out. You want the line from your head, shoulders, hips, knees and feet to be vertical. This normally means pressing your hips forward for most people. Keep tension in your adductors, your ankles and thighs are kept together throughout.

SUPPORT STRADDLE:

What happens when you put a support and a straddle sit together? Great abs training and awesome shoulder work! Once you've set up a support, lift your legs up into an L-sit. Then once you have the L-sit, move your legs apart to form a straddle pose. Remember to turn the legs out so your ankles turn up towards the ceiling. Also, watch out for the shoulders rolling forward. Maintain a straight line so your shoulders are retracted.

INVERTED HOOK:

The inverted hook is a drop that comes from a planche block. From support, you lean forwards and lock your arms against the inside of your thighs. This allows you to rock forwards into a planche block. It takes balance, but before you know it you will have a perfectly flat line from foot to head. Then from the planche block, you rock forwards. This will make your head and chest lower down and your legs go up vertically. Let one leg go through the middle of the straps and the other leg catches one strap with the back of your knee. Drop into position and hit your best flex! **M&F**

www.wildtraining.co.uk
Instagram: @wildptjamesg
Photos: Simon Howard



GENES GYM



PHOTO CREDITS: GRAVITY FITNESS

5 EXERCISES TO MASTER

For Calisthenics Beginners

You've seen the gravity-defying feats of strength displayed by calisthenic inspired street workouts and decided it's your turn to look cool AF pulling off the perfect human flag for the gram. Well... not so fast calisthenics newbie; these moves take some serious practise, luckily the experts at Gravity Fitness are on hand to show you how to get started.

All the gear

It's not obligatory to buy equipment to start out on your calisthenics journey; a local playground should provide all the tools required to get going, however, having daily access to specially designed equipment from the comfort of your home will put you in good stead. A good quality set of parallettes and a pull-up bar is a good place to start.

Forget the bro science

If you're a gym regular looking to improve functionality you need to forget the bro science and start with a fresh approach. Calisthenics are compound movements, making traditional bodybuilding splits obsolete. The traditional chin-up for example, works your biceps, back and shoulders so your gym game just got a major shakeup. The best way to structure your new routine is into broader movement groups i.e. push/ pull. Try dips, handstands and push-ups one day and pull-ups, chin-ups and rows the next.

Practise makes perfect

Calisthenics is no easy skill to perfect, it will require some determination and hard graft to pull off

a polished routine but just remember we all start somewhere. With lots of repetition and progression you will find yourself mastering new tricks whilst gaining strength and stripping fat.

Start with the basics

Leave the advanced skills to the YouTube aficionados to begin with and concentrate on mastering the basics. You will need to develop strength and balance in order to progress onto more complex routines. These 5 basic exercises should provide the foundations for all calisthenic moves, perfect these and the coveted world of muscle-ups and human flags is within your grasp...

1. PUSH-UP

Not only the staple of any worthwhile calisthenics programme, but a functional compound move that should be incorporated to everyone's training regimen. Push-ups work a wide array of muscles and develop great core strength. Keep your back straight and core engaged with hands shoulder-width apart. Position wrists, elbows and shoulders in a straight line and lower to the floor, allowing the elbows to come in. Master the basic move and then increase difficulty by raising the feet, widening and narrowing the hands and eventually including some explosive moves like hand claps.

2. DIP

Another classic functional move this time targeting the triceps. Select a sturdy bench or box, sit on the edge and place your hands on the edge, either side of your hips. Extend your legs and slide your glutes off the bench so that your bodyweight is now supported by your hands. Bend the elbows to lower the body and straighten to raise. Repeat

3. PULL-UP

This is where s**t gets real. You need to be proficient at the standard pull-up in order to even think about broaching anything tricky. Find a pull-up bar and grab with a shoulder-width grip, palms down. Hang with straight arms, legs off the floor. Pull yourself up by pulling the elbows down to the floor until your chin passes above the bar. Lower with control until your arms are straight. Eliminate momentum to build strength. Repeat.



4. ASSISTED PISTOL SQUAT

Pistol squats are no easy feat and are the ultimate measure of balance and core strength, not to mention a supreme leg strength builder. Stand in front of a pole or sturdy vertical object that allows you to reach your leg around it. Firmly grasp with your hands and lower into a pistol position with one leg in a squat position, heel on the floor and other leg stretched out straight, parallel to the floor. Using your arms as much as necessary, pull yourself back up and repeat. As your leg strength improves, you will find reliance on your upper body decreases.

5. PUSH-UP TO HANDSTAND

Start in a push-up position with your feet against the wall. Begin walking your feet up the wall with hands coming closer into the wall with each movement, until you achieve a full handstand position. Hold for as long as possible to improve strength. If you can't reach full handstand position at first; go as far in as you can, it's great for the shoulders. **M&F**

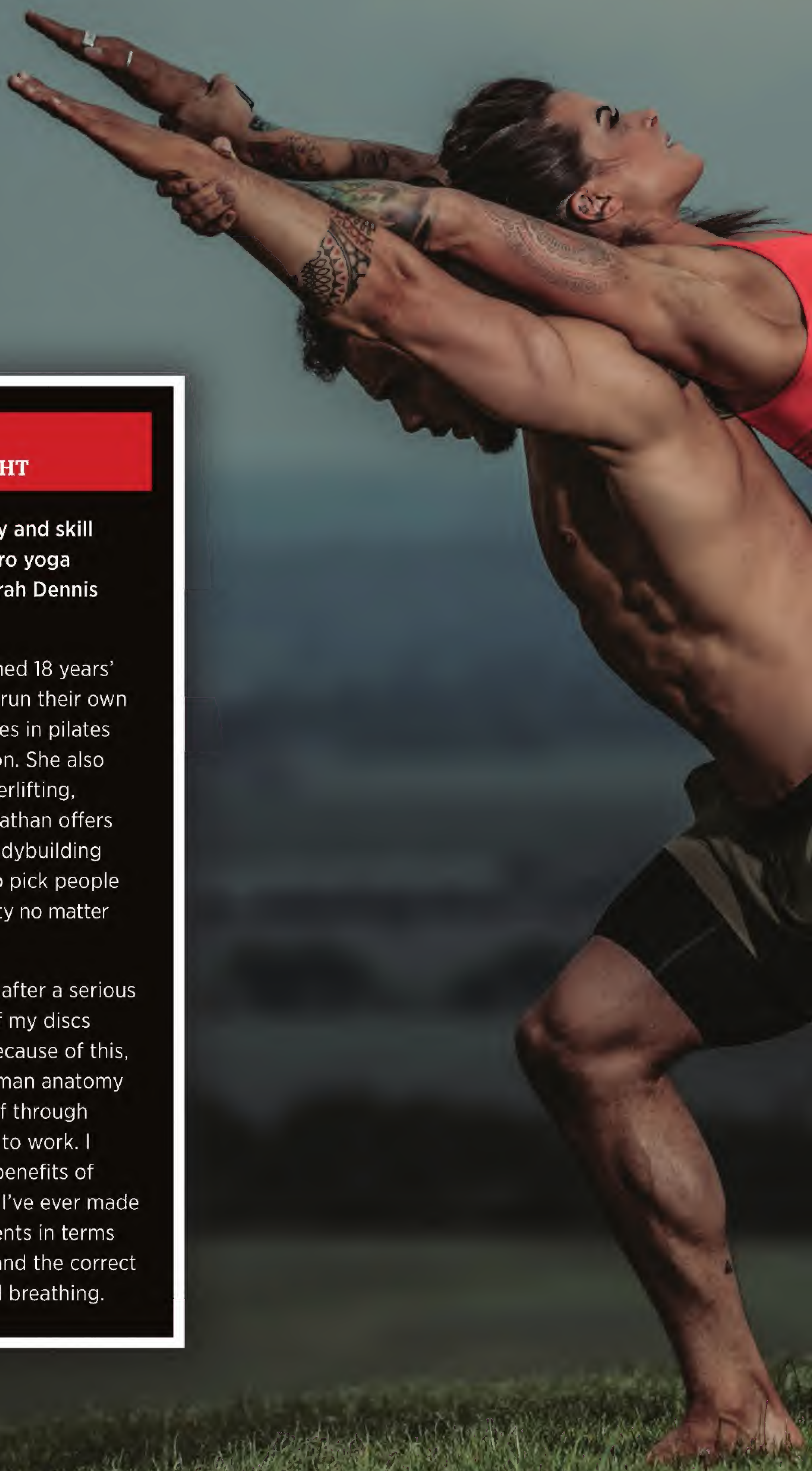
www.gravityfitness.co.uk

BY DANNI LEVY**PHOTOGRAPHS: JODY WRIGHT**

Improve your strength, flexibility and skill set with this partner assisted acro yoga workout from top specialists Sarah Dennis and Nathan Nelson.

Sarah and Nathan offer a combined 18 years' experience coaching clients and run their own gym, FitBase UK. Sarah specialises in pilates and pre and post-natal instruction. She also has extensive experience in powerlifting, bodybuilding and calisthenics. Nathan offers broad knowledge in athletics, bodybuilding and calisthenics and both love to pick people up and improve their athletic ability no matter what their age or fitness levels.

"I first got into personal training after a serious spine injury," says Sarah. "Five of my discs were damaged beyond repair. Because of this, I became fascinated with the human anatomy and was determined to fix myself through exercise as nothing else seemed to work. I began to study deeper into the benefits of pilates. This was the best choice I've ever made for both myself and all of my clients in terms of helping with overall mobility and the correct education on core activation and breathing."



Buddy Up!



"The poses in these pictures are representative of our combined skill sets. Both Nathan and I train as all-rounders in health and fitness, with our main priority being movement and mobility. We both come from a bodybuilding and CrossFit background, so we have mixed calisthenics, gymnastics, pilates and yoga to create the duo intermediate poses.

"There are so many benefits to this type of training in mastering your own bodyweight, including maintenance of joint function, better flexibility and balance (core strength), and injury prevention."

Nathan says yoga is not just for the girls!

"I've always thrown myself into things head on (think that's the big kid in me) and tried my hand at everything," he says. "I believe you can achieve anything with a little focus and determination.

"The biggest factor for me in any sort of workout/ activity/ sport is enjoyment.

You have to love and have fun with what you're doing (even if you are beasting yourself in the gym).

"I mix everything up and take a different approach to training through HIIT, bodyweight workouts, calisthenics and full body resistance workouts in each session. The poses in the pictures really depict myself and Sarah as trainers. We think outside of the box and merge everything together we've learned along the way to create some awesome shapes.

"Keeping mobile and progressive stretching is so important for both men and women, yet it's overlooked by most. Practising mobility and stretching exercises consistently has helped me to recover faster, prevent injury and develop muscle in a totally different way. I've achieved a better rounded physique by being able to move in a better ROM."





Get ready for action!

*Fancy giving these moves a go with your better half or gym buddy?
Prep yourself for action with these simple but important steps.*

INFINITY

Prep work:

- Spine rolls (Pilates roll back)
- Upper-back foam rolling or trigger point ball into rear delts and trapezius
- Hamstring lengthening stretches
- Shoulder wall angels





DUO WARRIOR

Prep work:

- Hip flexor stretches
- Upper-back foam rolling and trigger point ball massaging in rear delts
- Chest opening stretches
- Quad stabilisation and core strength

BY **DANNI LEVY**

PHOTOGRAPHS: **JODY WRIGHT**

FEATURING: **SARAH DENNIS
AND NATHAN NELSON**

INSTAGRAM: **@SARAHDENNISPT
@NATHAN.NELSONPT**

Bod Watch!

PHOTOS: **BlueLineEfex**

Step outside and sculpt a beach bod to be proud of with IFBB Bikini Pro Janet Layug's bod watch workout!

Janet has racked up a number of top five Bikini Olympia placings and recently took top spot at the Arnold's. She is one of the favourites to take the title at the O this year and with a body to die for, we can see why!

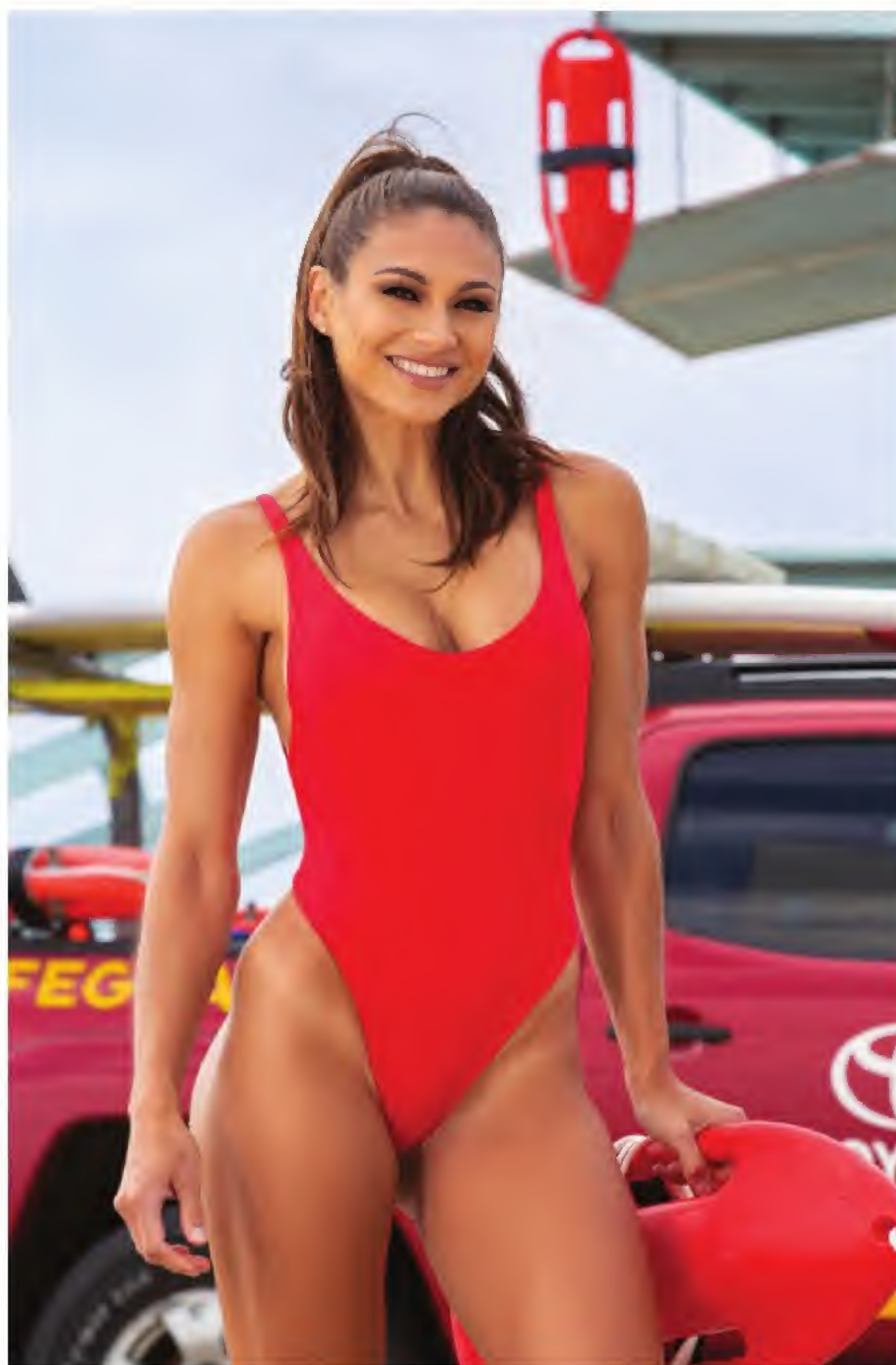
Janet says: "Getting and staying in shape doesn't have to mean spending hours inside the gym, even at a professional level.

"I love nothing more than heading down to the beach for a workout- it's an opportunity to get some fresh air whilst maintaining the physique I've worked hard for.

"As a mother, I also find it a great way to get my daughter involved and introduce the whole family to a healthy way of life.

"No matter what your body goals or fitness level, give these exercises a try and if you're not a gym member, practice the entire workout 3 x a week for best results."





INSTAGRAM: @JANETLAYUG

Name: Janet Layug

Age: 30

Height: 5'8"

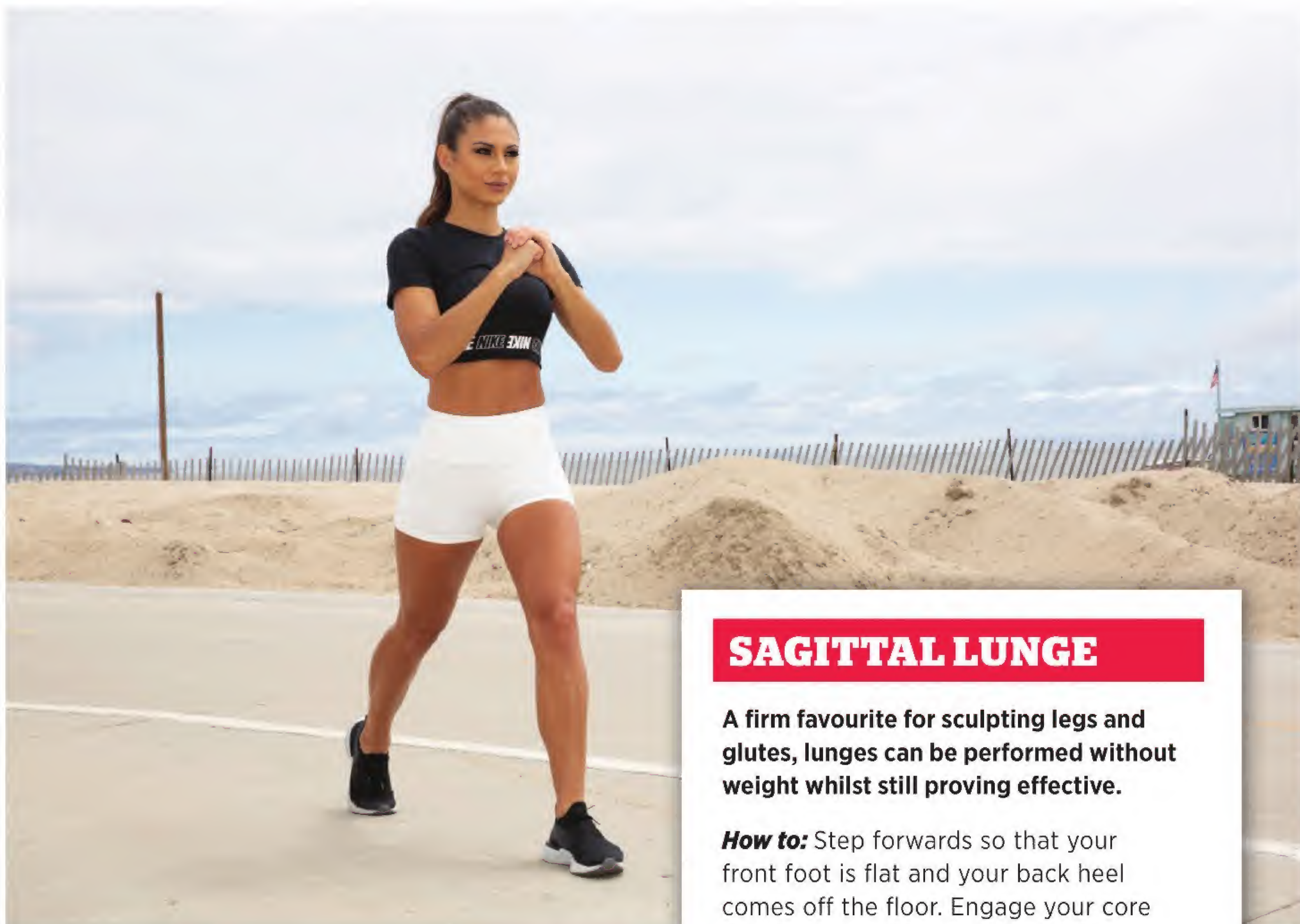
Weight: 130lbs

Location: Lakeland, Florida

Turned Bikini Pro: 2013

About Janet: A former Hooters waitress, Janet burst onto the scene as their calendar cover girl in 2015, before winning the Hooters International Swimsuit pageant.

She balances being a mum with competing in the IFBB Bikini Pro division. Janet's athletic daughter can often be seen joining her outdoors for a workout. She is also a registered nurse.



SAGITTAL LUNGE

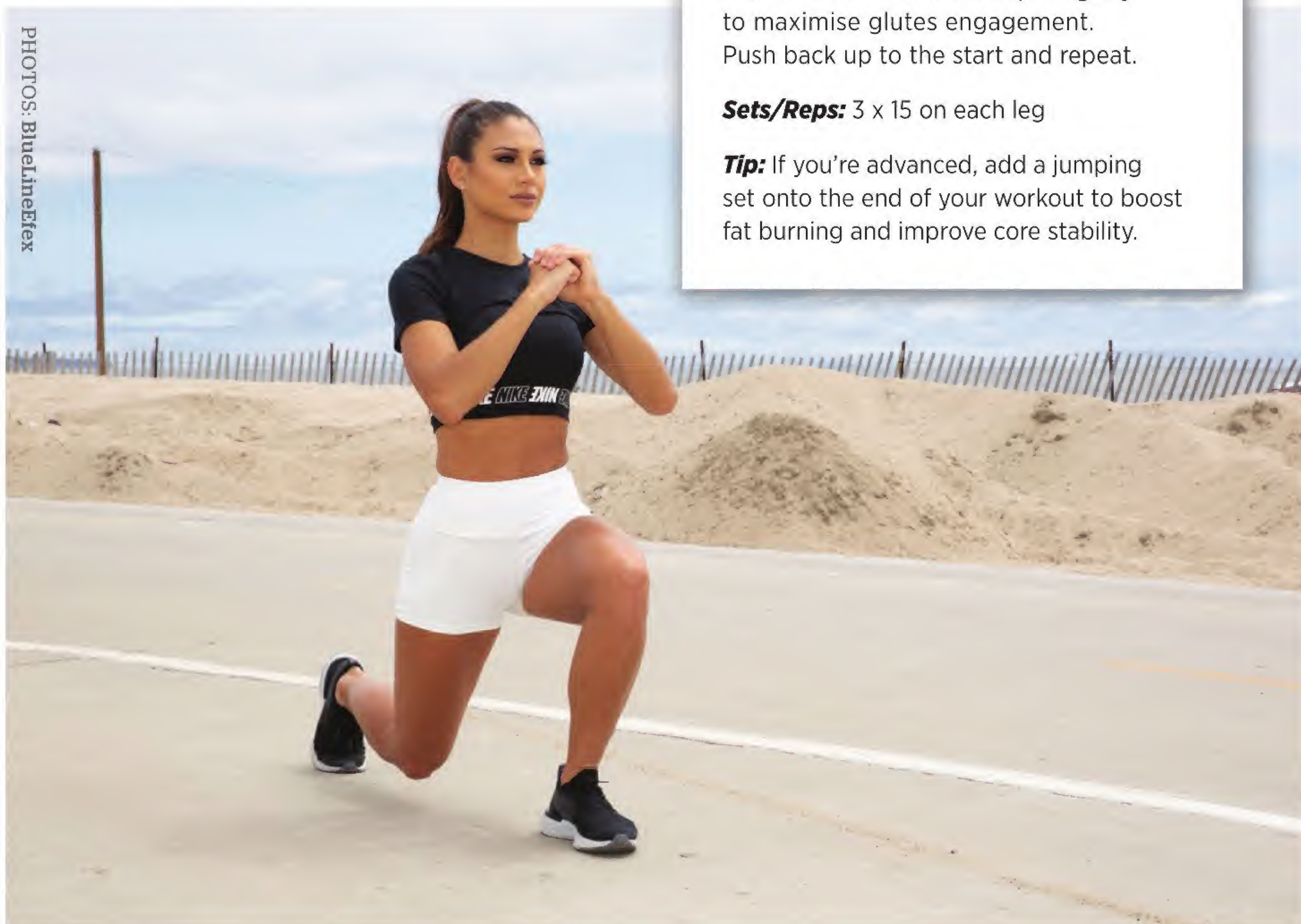
A firm favourite for sculpting legs and glutes, lunges can be performed without weight whilst still proving effective.

How to: Step forwards so that your front foot is flat and your back heel comes off the floor. Engage your core and lean forward at the hips slightly to maximise glutes engagement. Push back up to the start and repeat.

Sets/Reps: 3 x 15 on each leg

Tip: If you're advanced, add a jumping set onto the end of your workout to boost fat burning and improve core stability.

PHOTOS: BlueLineFlex



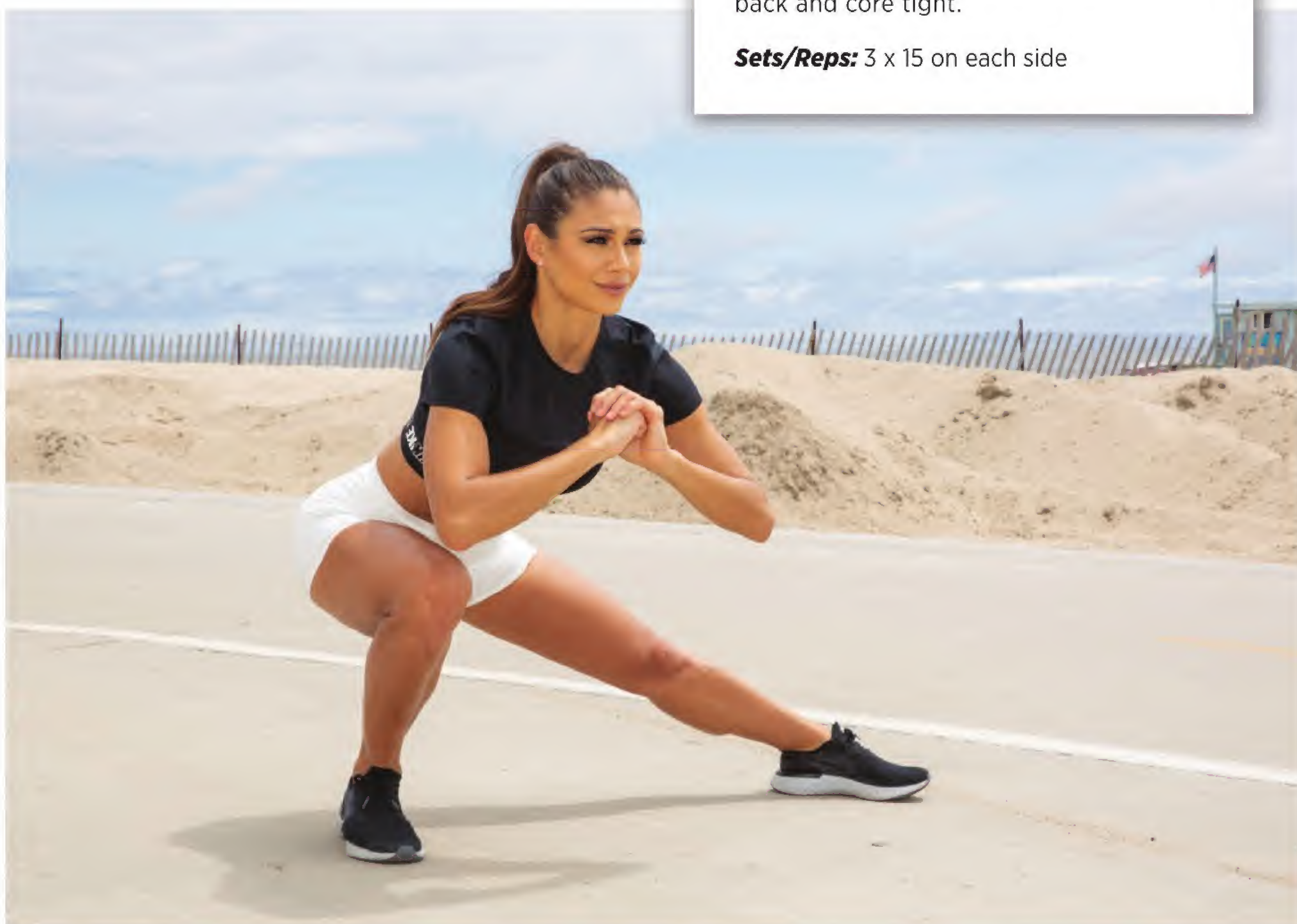


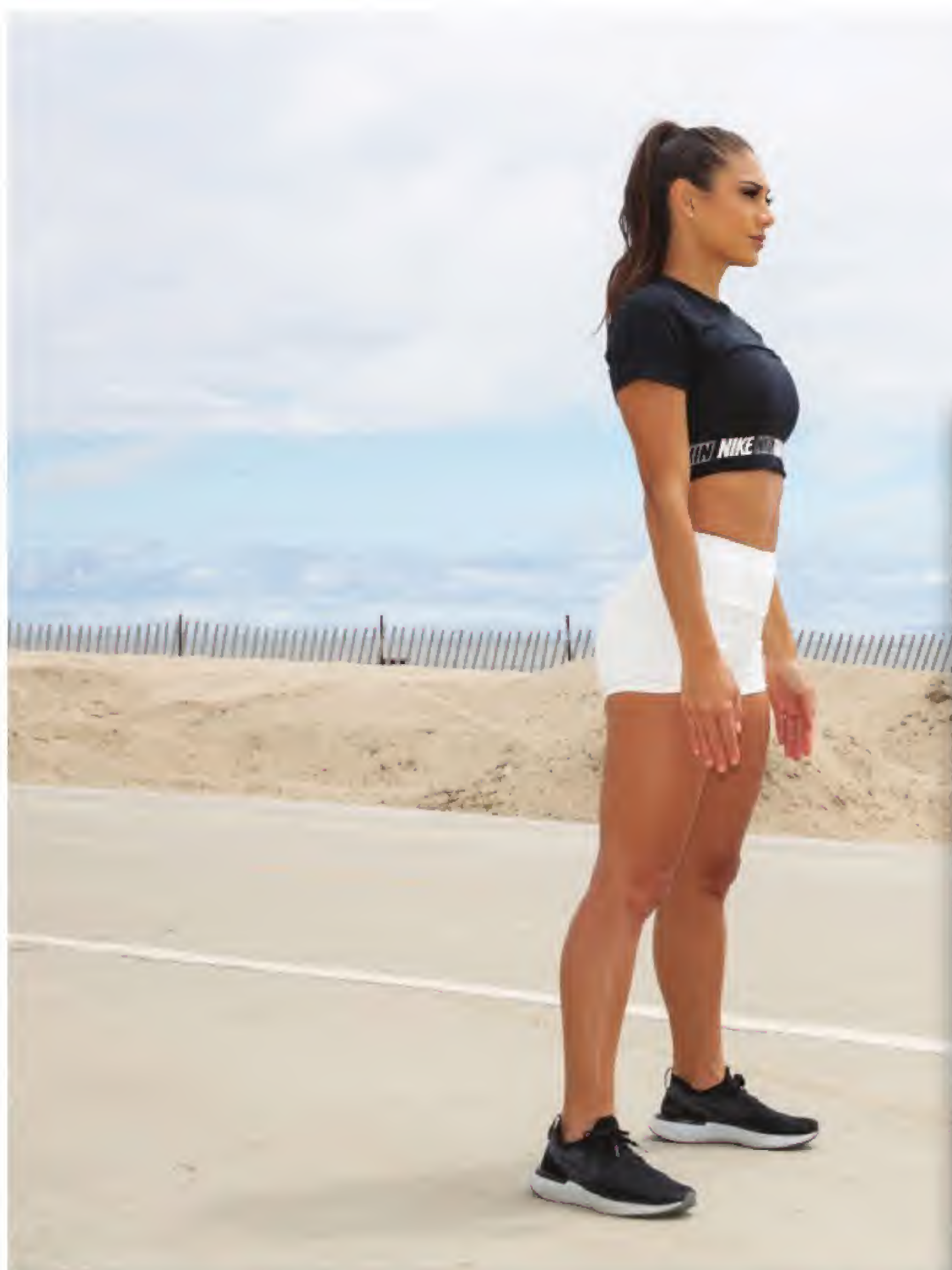
LATERAL SQUAT

An excellent way to promote dynamic flexibility of the adductor muscles.

How to: Step out to one side and sit, keeping your weight central. Lever your upper-body forwards slightly at the hips and push through the supporting heel to activate engagement of the glutes. Remember to keep your shoulders back and core tight.

Sets/Reps: 3 x 15 on each side





LATERAL SKATER BOUND

Activates the adductor muscles both dynamically and isometrically. Plyometric exercises are great for torching fat and improving speed.

How to: Lengthen: Bound to one side ensuring both feet leave the floor.

Load: Cross one foot behind the other, reaching it as far as you can before lowering the same hand towards the floor in front of you and levering forwards at the hips. Both feet should be fully in contact with the floor during the loading phase.

Fire: Fire up as you leap towards the opposite side and repeat.

Sets/Reps: 3 x 20





JUMPING SQUAT

A plyometric version of the standard squat, designed to improve power and endurance and burn calories fast!

How to: Sit into a deep squat position, before jumping up as high as you can with your legs straight, powering your arms down by your sides to help propel you.

Sets/Reps: 3 x 20

Photos: BlueLineEfex
www.BlueLineEfex.com
Instagram: @bluelineefex

Cap it!

BY DANNI LEVY

PHOTOGRAPHS: SIMON HOWARD

Capped shoulders are a necessity if you really want to complete your physique. Whether you're aiming for the long, lean look or you want to smash the stage, no gym bunny's bod is complete without a killer set of delts.

Follow this essential shoulder routine from IFBB Pro Rhea Gayle and turn heads all night long in your best strappy dress!

Name: Rhea Gayle

Age: 26

From: London

Occupation: TEAM LRF Coach

Achievements:

- Earning my IFBB PRO Status - June 2018
- 5th Place at the Veronica Gallego Classic Pro - June 2018
- 3rd Place at the New York Pro - June 2019
- 3rd Place at the Puerto Rico Pro - June 2019
- 4th Place at the Toronto Pro - June 2019

Stage weight: 54kg

Off-season weight: 63/65kg

Instagram: @rheagpt





PHOTOGRAPHS: SIMON HOWARD

DUMBBELL SHOULDER PRESS

1 warm up set: Perform 12-15 reps

2 working sets: Perform 6-10 reps
heavy then 10-12 reps to failure

Rest: 30 seconds between sets



BENT OVER REAR DELT FLYES

3 working sets:
Perform 10-12 reps



SEATED SIDE RAISES

3 working sets:
Perform 8-10 reps heavy, then
2 sets of 12-15 reps to failure



SEATED FRONT RAISES

3 working sets:

Perform 8-10 reps heavy,
then 2 sets of 12-15 reps to failure

PHOTOGRAPHS: SIMON HOWARD



Bodyweight *by* Beau



By **Tori Beaumont** Photographs by **Jules Godfrey**

Lever on up!

*With this signature static hold led by calisthenics whizz **Tori Beaumont***

This issue, I am sharing one of my signature static holds- the single arm elbow lever. I have also incorporated some of the accessory progressions to help you achieve this move, working lots on the hip flexors and core strength. Enjoy and don't forget to tag me in on your [#elbowlever](#) journey!



ELBOW LEVER & CORE PROGRESSIONS

Skin the Cat

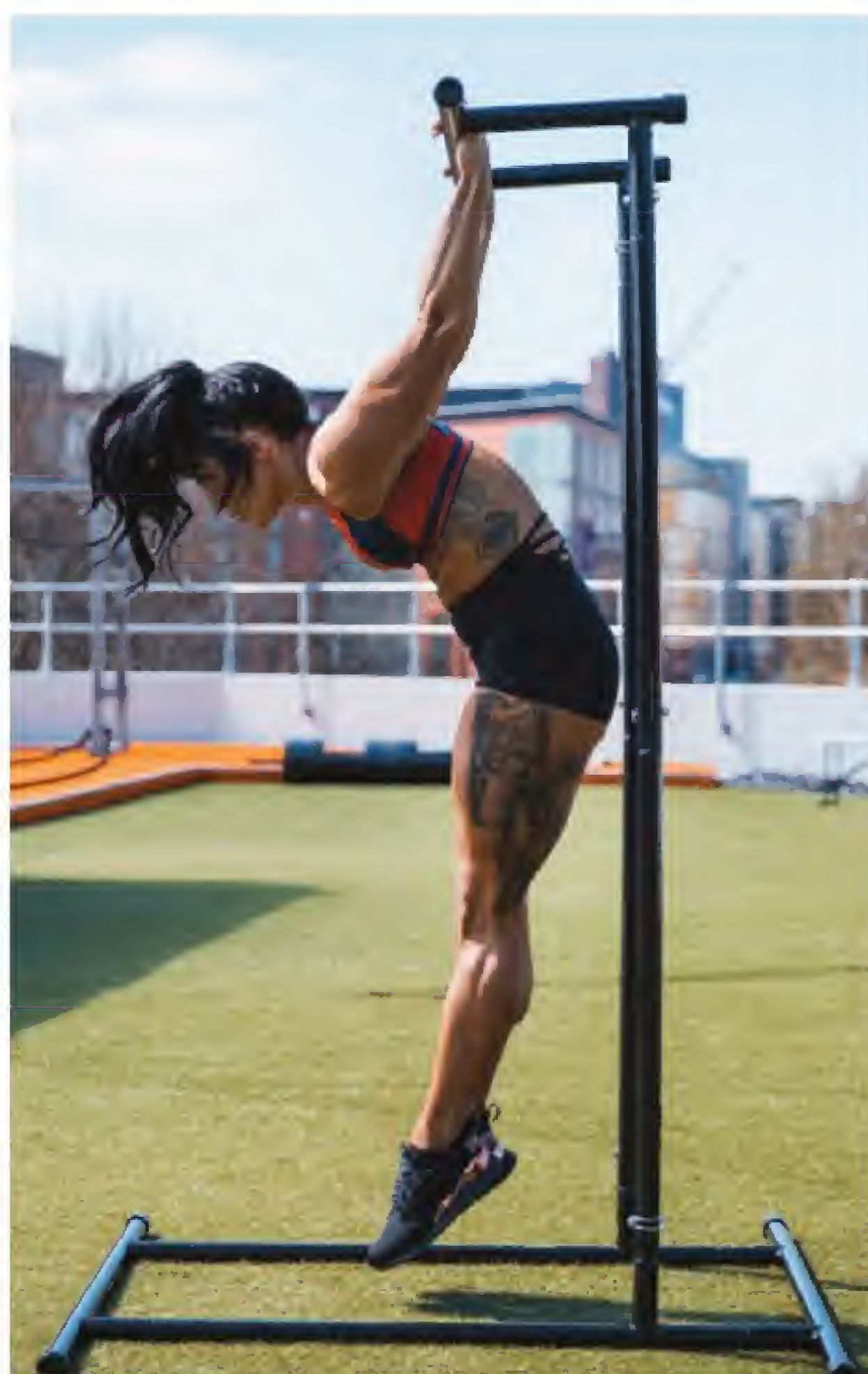
1. Starting from a dead hang position, lift your body up and rotate yourself backwards in one full rotation.



2. Feet go underneath the bar.



3. Dead hang with your shoulders and arms twisted behind you.



4. From this position, rotate yourself forwards until you return to the starting position - that's one rep.



5. Do this for 5 sets x 8 reps.

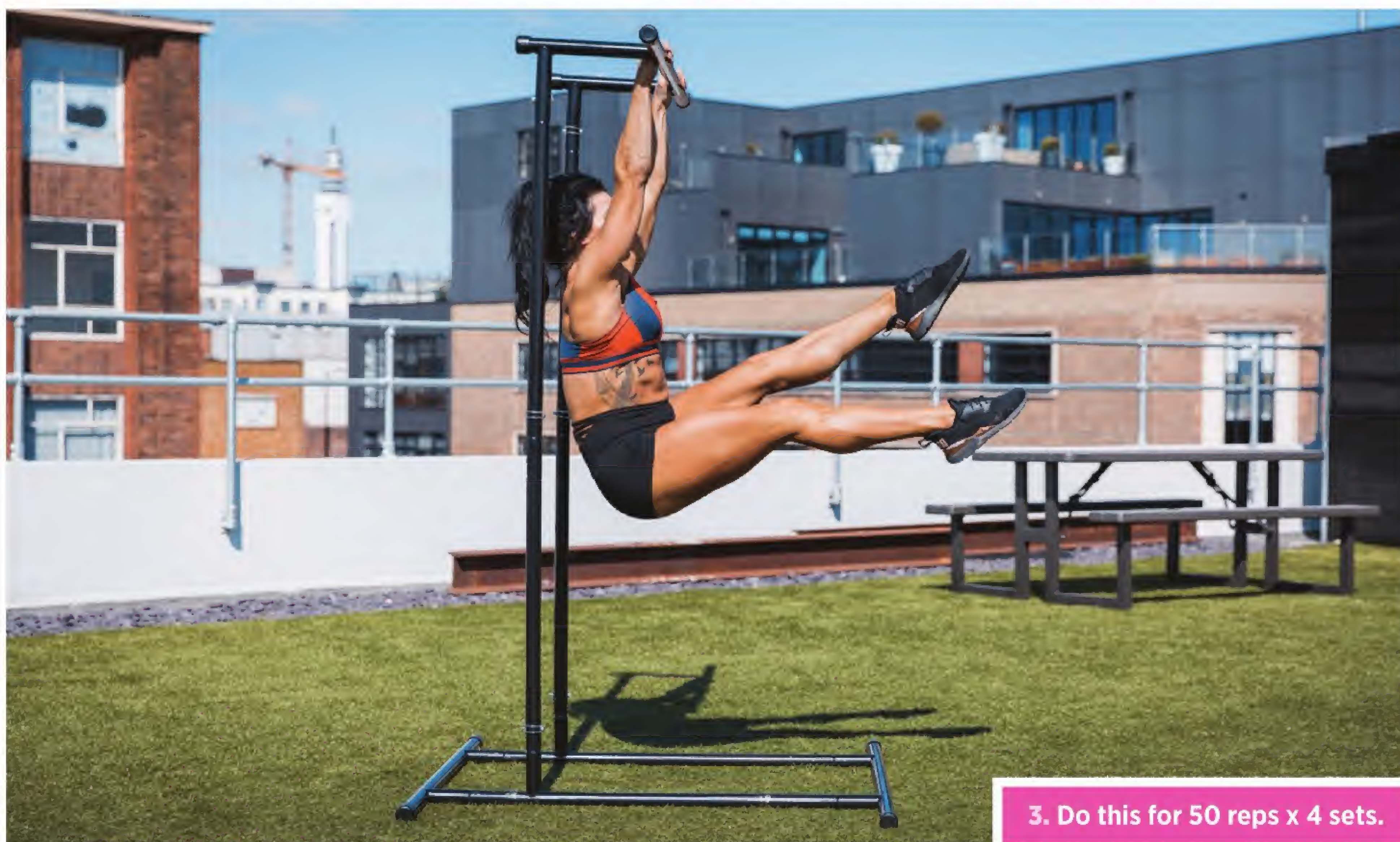
ELBOW LEVER & CORE PROGRESSIONS

Flutter Kicks

1. Hang in the L-sit position, keeping your back upright and core fully engaged.



2. Keep your legs straight, point your toes and flutter your feet up and down alternating left to right.



3. Do this for 50 reps x 4 sets.

ELBOW LEVER & CORE PROGRESSIONS

Elbow Lever/ Bent /Straddle Leg Raises

- 1.** Using parallel bars or working from the floor, load weight onto the elbow on one side of your body, whilst using the other arm to assist the load.



- 2.** Keep your core engaged at all times, with your eyeline looking forwards and legs slightly bent in a frog-like pose.



- 3.** Slowly and gently lift your toes off the floor. As you do so, engage your glutes and lift your legs.



- 4.** Return your feet to the floor and repeat.

- 5.** Once you have the feel for this, extend your legs straight into a straddle. Apply the same principles and take it slowly.



- 6.** Ensure you maintain full engagement of your whole body throughout the exercise.



- 7.** Do this for 10 reps x 5 sets.

ELBOW LEVER & CORE PROGRESSIONS

Elbow Lever Hand Taps

1. Start in the same position as the previous exercise with your legs in a frog-like pose. Try to hold for 5 seconds.



2. With your assisting hand, start to lift your fingertips off then replace.



2. Gradually take the whole hand off the floor or the bar, then replace.



4. Remember to keep your eyeline looking forward and really squeeze those glutes. This will stop you from leaning towards the floor.



5. Do this for 5 sets x 5 reps.

ELBOW LEVER & CORE PROGRESSIONS

Superman Holds

1. Simultaneously raise your arms, legs, and chest off of the floor and hold this contraction for 2 seconds.



2. Squeeze your lower back to get the best results from this exercise. **3.** Remember to exhale during this movement.



Follow Tori on Instagram @_tbeau

4. Do this for 2 minutes x 5 sets.

Wheels ON FIRE

BY SAMANTHA YARDLEY

“If you want bigger legs and glutes, you better be prepared to work for them” says PCA champ, Melissa Nicola. Give her tried-and-tested lower body workout a go to achieve a coveted bubble butt with a shapely set of pins.

“The good news is that the principles are straight forward providing you can nail the execution and intensity you will be well on your way to a bigger, better set of legs” Melissa resolves.

“I always make sure I keep to the basic compounds or some variation thereof – leg press and squats are a must for me.

“Of equal importance to my regimen is training heavy; you need to challenge yourself! If it doesn’t challenge, it doesn’t change you. I go into some of my leg workouts scared of the numbers I need to hit, but there is no greater feeling than when you do” says the PCA beauty.

“It’s all about control, you need to feel the muscle working, slow negatives are a great way to really feel and connect with the muscle” explains Melissa. “Don’t rush your reps, just hitting the number of reps isn’t enough, you need to feel every one of them.





PHOTOGRAPHS: SIMON HOWARD

"I like to aim for two working sets on each exercise, my first set is in the 8 to 10 rep range and then I will do a back off set of 10 to 12 reps. I like to incorporate intensity amplifiers like drop sets, rest-pauses and muscle rounds to ensure I really am pushing to my limits.

"Always make sure your muscles are properly warmed up but don't waste too much energy on these warmups, you want to save everything for those working sets.

"Finally, keep going until you physically can't go any more, those last few reps at failure are the ones that will make all the difference".

EXERCISE 1: LEG PRESS

Set 1 - Warmup 200kg for 10 reps

Set 2 - Warmup 250kg for 8 reps

Set 3 - Warmup 300kg for 6 reps

Set 4 - 1st working set 400kg for 8 reps

Set 5 - 2nd working set 350kg for 15 reps

If you really want to push yourself, try this on your 2nd working set:

- First 5 reps with 4 second negative
- Next 5 reps with 4 second negative and 5 second hold at the bottom of the movement
- Then as many reps as possible until failure

PHOTOGRAPHS: SIMON HOWARD

EXERCISE 2: BARBELL SQUAT

Set 1 – Warmup 80kg for 10 reps

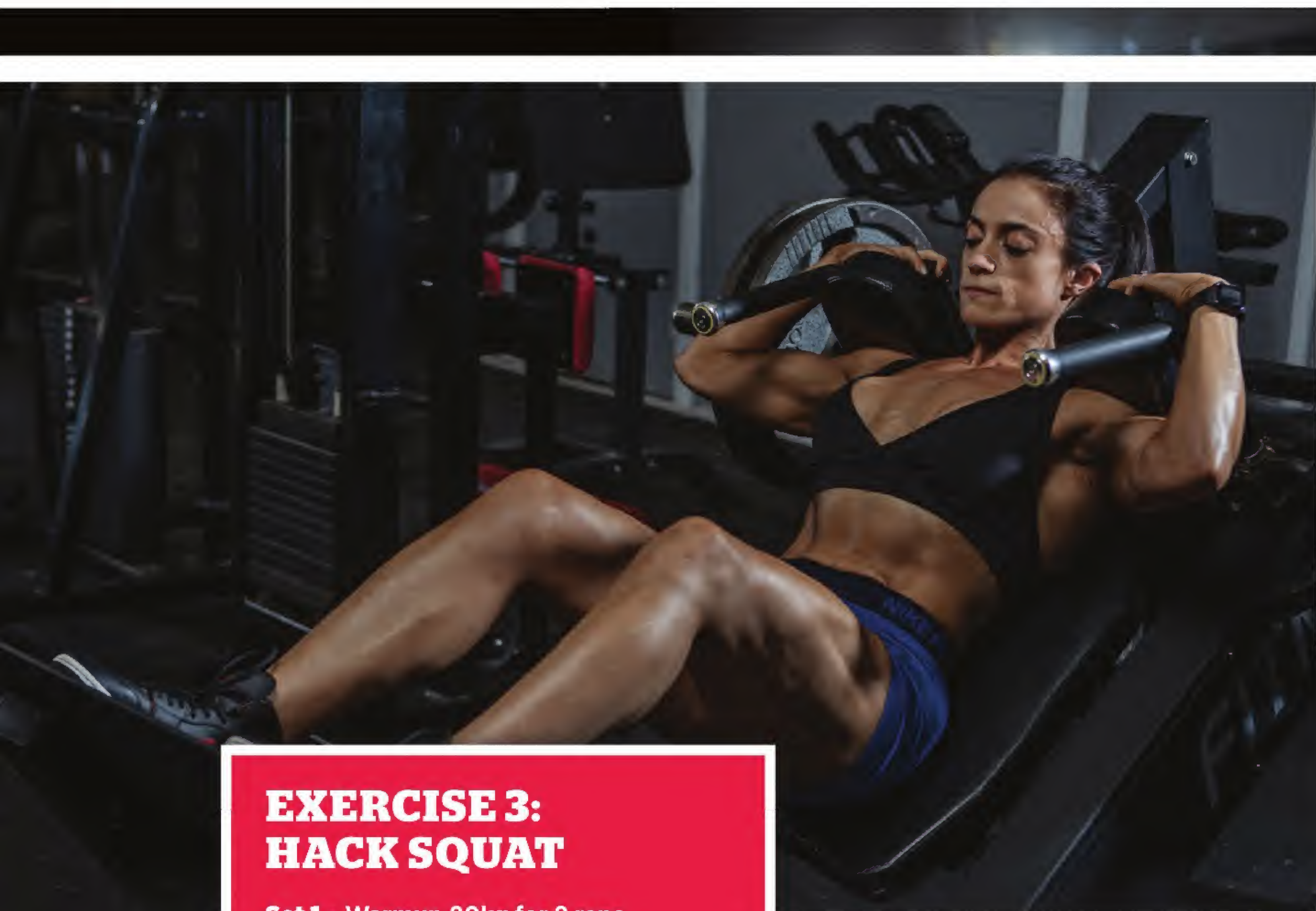
Set 2 – Warmup 100kg for 8 reps

Set 3 – Warmup 120kg for 5 reps

Set 4 – 1st Working set 130kg for 8 reps

Set 5 – 2nd Working set 110kg for 12 reps





EXERCISE 3: HACK SQUAT

Set 1 - Warmup 80kg for 8 reps

Set 2 - Warmup 120kg for 8 reps

Set 3 - 1st Working set 180kg for 8 reps

Set 4 - 2nd Working set 160kg for 15 reps



PHOTOGRAPHS: SIMON HOWARD



EXERCISE 4: LEG EXTENSIONS

Set 1 – Warmup 60kg for 10 reps

Set 2 – Warmup 80kg for 8 reps

Set 3 – 1st Working set 110kg for 8 reps

Set 4 – 2nd Working set 70kg for 50 reps

The 2nd working set is broken down as follows:

- 10 full reps
- 10 reps at the top of the movement
- 10 reps in the middle part of the movement
- 10 reps at the bottom of the movement
- 10 full reps

EXERCISE 5: HIGH AND WIDE LEG PRESS (HAMSTRING FOCUS)

Set 1 – Warmup 120kg for 10 reps

Set 2 – Warmup 160kg for 8 reps

Set 3 – 1st working set 200kg for 8 reps

Set 4 – 2nd working set 180kg for 15 reps

You can expect the weight here to decrease, this is more about execution and time under tension. You need to get your knees right to your chest and feel the stretch in your hamstring and glutes.



PHOTOGRAPHS: SIMON HOWARD

EXERCISE 6: ROMANIAN DEADLIFT

Set 1 – Warmup 70kg for 8 reps

Set 2 – Warmup 100kg for 8 reps

Set 3 – 1st working set 120kg for 8 reps

Set 4 – 2nd working set 100kg for 12 reps

Once again, the focus is on technique and execution rather than a really heavy lift, especially as this will fatigue your lower back.



Win a photoshoot with top fitness photographer Jody Wright!



Credit: Instagram @cursetheseeyes

I've shot with some of the world's best fitness photographers over the past ten years, but Jody Wright has to be in my top 3. Not only is the guy a whole bundle of fun to be around, his eye for creativity is nothing short of awe inspiring.

Having spent 3 days shooting with Jody in and around my Marbella home, I wanted to give one of my gorgeous readers the chance to do the same.

If you'd like to win this once in a lifetime prize, just tag us in a selfie on Instagram @muscleandfitnesshersuk @jody_wright1 and tell us why you deserve to win!

Good luck!





Muscle & Fitness *HERS* Loves FREDDY LEGGINGS

PINK HIGH WAIST WR.UP® ACTIVE

These hot pink fitness leggings from the WR.UP® Active line are perfect for looking and feeling fabulous during sport and athletic activities. The high-rise skinny-fit model is made from their specifically designed D.I.W.O.® polyester, a resistant, practical material that stands for Dry In Wet Out. Its innovative design and exclusive treatment give this stretchy fabric a unique ability to move sweat away from your body and keep your skin virtually dry at a constant temperature. This minimises the unpleasant cooling sensation which occurs when you take a break. The clever patented WR.UP® technology works to lift, shape and smooth your figure, enhancing your silhouette as you train. Ideal for fitness activities such as dance, yoga and so much more, both indoors and out.



£69.90

MELANGE GREY HIGH WAIST WR.UP® ACTIVE

These easy-to-wear Melange Grey WR.UP® leggings are perfect for sports such as dance, yoga and other fitness activities. Timelessly stylish and practical, the breathable D.I.W.O.® fabric, will keep you dry even during your most intense training sessions. The Grey Marl colour way is a wardrobe essential as it can be paired with any colour.



£74.90

NEON CORAL WR.UP® ACTIVE

These bright and beautiful neon coral fitness leggings from the WR.UP® Active line are perfect for injecting a pop of colour into your fitness wardrobe. The high-rise skinny-fit model is made from their specifically designed D.I.W.O.® polyester, a resistant, practical material that stands for Dry In Wet Out. Its innovative design and exclusive treatment give this stretchy fabric a unique ability to move sweat away from your body and keep your skin virtually dry at a constant temperature. This minimises the unpleasant cooling sensation which occurs when you take a break. The clever patented WR.UP® technology works to lift, shape and smooth your figure, enhancing your silhouette as you train. Ideal for fitness activities such as dance, yoga and so much more, both indoors and out.



£69.90



£69.90

BLACK WITH NEON ORANGE WAISTBAND WR.UP® ACTIVE

The ultimate WR.UP® Active leggings featuring a contrasting pop of colour waistband are perfect for activities such as yoga and dance. Made using the patented D.I.W.O.® fabric, this breathable garment takes perspiration away from the skin for maximum comfort while training. Freddy's WR.UP® technology embraces your curves with a delicate shaping effect, enhancing your silhouette and your training. *HERS*

All available from www.freddyclothing.co.uk

“Vaser Liposculpting Transformed my Body!”

By Melissa Marshall, 43



“

“Why don’t you try vaser lipo?”

My friend Sarah suggested to me over a morning coffee meet.

”

As a mum of 4 teenage boys, I am active, fun and outgoing, but ever since having tummy tuck surgery some years back, I really struggled to hide the unsightly scar the procedure had left me with.

“Why don’t you try vaser lipo,” my friend Sarah suggested to me over a morning coffee meet. It was a term I’d heard of, but I wasn’t familiar with what could be achieved.

Intrigued, I did my research and was recommended to Consultant Plastic Surgeon Amir Nakhdejvani who operates from the Bella Vou Clinic in Tunbridge Wells. His results were so impressive that I immediately booked myself in for a consultation.

The moment I walked through the surgery door, I was met with a smile and it instantly put my nerves at rest. I was so excitedly optimistic and secured the date there and then. Within two minutes of meeting Amir, he put me completely at ease and I knew I could safely put my body in his hands.

“I’m so pleased for you!” Sarah announced excitedly as I made the call to tell her my news. Amir recommended Vaser Liposculpting to my stomach and flanks in order to completely remould

my midsection, smooth out my scar and give me the definition I had back in my 20’s.

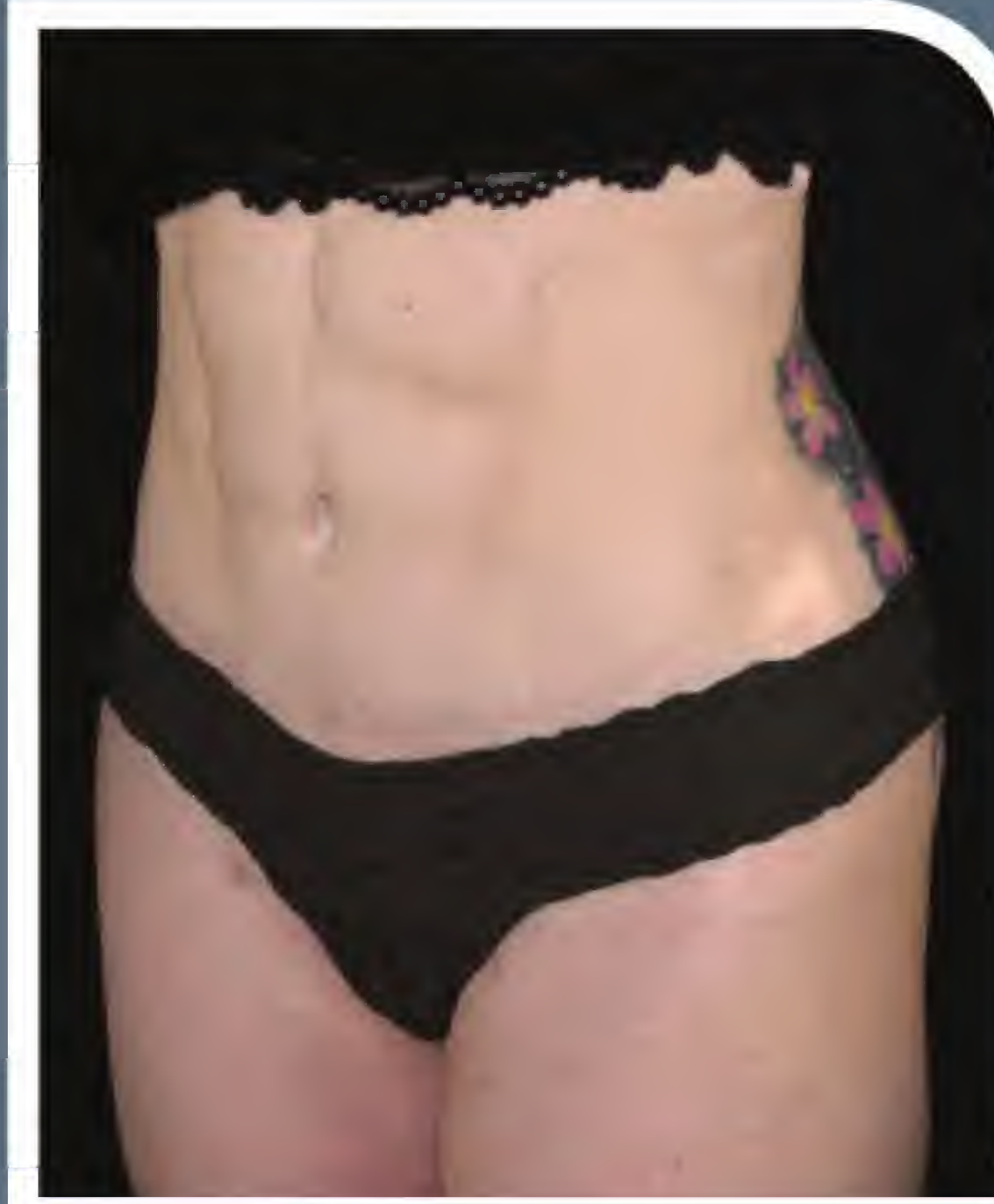
I do a lot of yoga and have to wear tight fitting clothing for this, but my hip to hip scar really showed where I’d gained weight on and off over the years. I was left with quite a lip, so wearing figure hugging dresses or yoga pants meant you could clearly see the line. My dream was to regain the confidence I had ten years ago.

“After the procedure you will be able to wear whatever you like without having to worry about lumps and bumps,” Amir confirmed to me at the consultation. “This is a modern procedure where I will remove the unwanted fat cells from the body and drain them out during the process. This encourages collagen to build within the body and underneath the skin, so it basically shrink wraps the skin back and gets rid of that looseness and wobbly feeling. You’ll regain what you had back in your 20’s, or before you had kids.”

It was music to my ears. The procedure would completely redefine my midsection and take me back to a comfortable place.



PHOTOS: MELISSA MARSHALL

**Before****Five days after****3 weeks after**

Because I'd previously had a tummy tuck, it had also been explained to me this had resulted in the appearance redundant skin and low abdominal fat. Amir explained that a tummy tuck procedure can create a smooth, flat appearance of the abdomen but unfortunately, does not give you any definition. Having tone to my midsection which could be created through vaser lipo was the part I most looked forward to.

On the day of the procedure the nurses settled me in and refreshed me on what to expect.

"Bruising and tenderness can be expected," they informed me. "This tends to subside quite quickly. You'll have drains for 24 hours post-surgery to remove any excess fluid. This can be a little uncomfortable, but you'll feel fine once the drains are removed."

The day after surgery, the drains were removed and I had a lymphatic massage. I felt so much better. Despite the slight discomfort immediately after the op, I soon realised this was just from the drains, not the procedure itself.

The results were astonishing and immediate and you could see a continued improvement after each massage. They're a really important part of the process and help to alleviate swelling and excess fluid.

I also wore a high definition vaser vest and a compression garment given to me by the clinic. The vest keeps you feeling nice and safe and secure and keeps you in the right space. It compresses everything to reduce swelling. I had to wear for 4 weeks, but it's quite comfortable and after a few days I couldn't have imagined not wearing it.




Fast forward to the present time and I can't believe the change. It takes 6 months for your body to completely heal, so I've not even seen the final result yet and to say I'm over the moon is an understatement! **HERS**

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A woman with blonde hair is shown from the chest up, applying a white cream to her left shoulder with her right hand. The background is dark and moody, with the woman's face partially visible in profile. The text is overlaid on the image.

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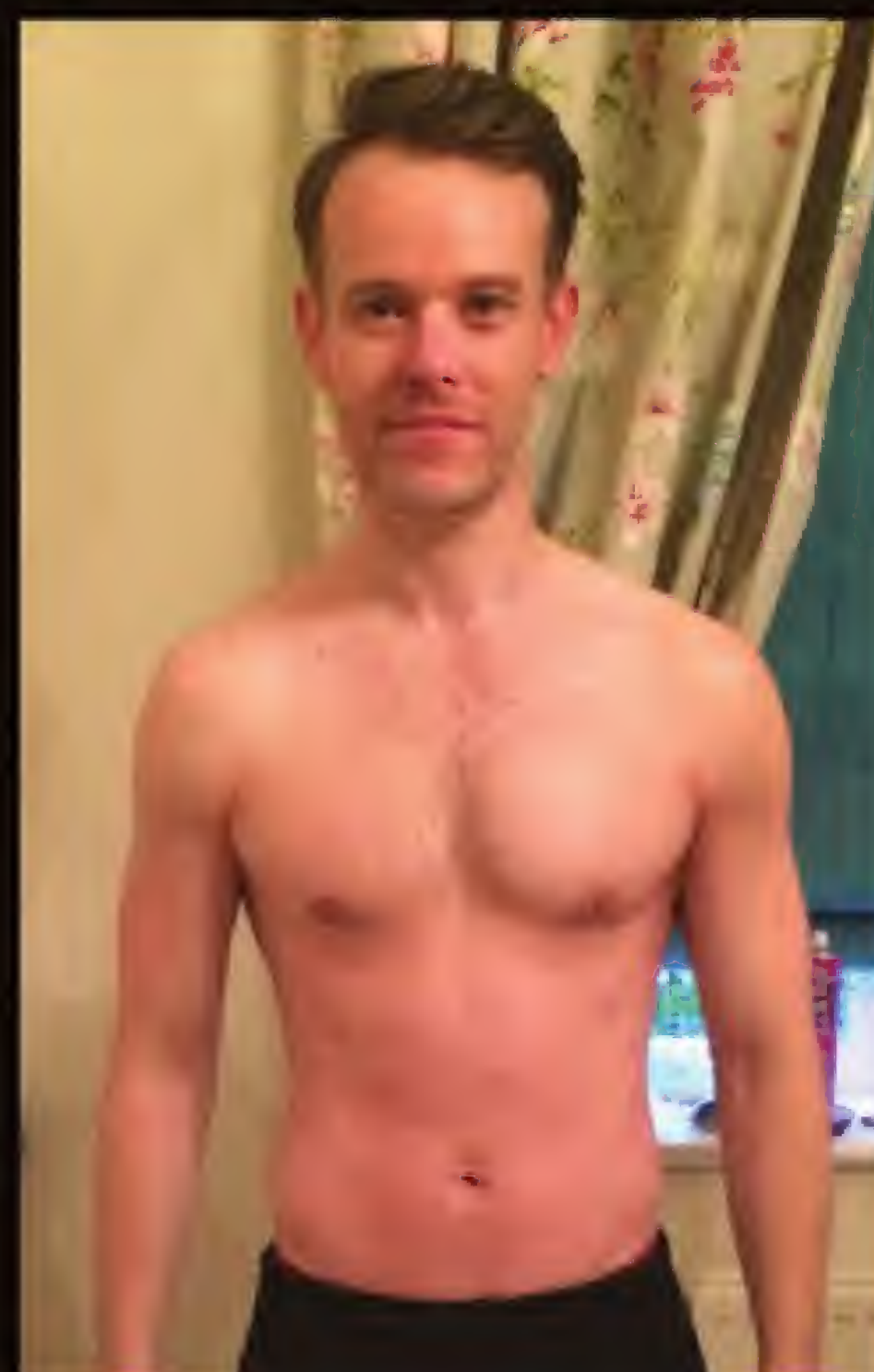
REAL LIFE TRANSFORMATIONS

PARALYSED TO GALVANISED

After

PHOTO: REBECCA ANDREWS

Before



I was seven when I was diagnosed with meningitis, it's one of those things I remember as a child and not much else before that. I sat in a wheelchair as I heard the harrowing diagnosis from the doctor, paralysed from the neck down; unable to move and practically unable to speak.

I was lucky that my mum worked at the hospital and spotted the symptoms; had she not of, I'm positive I wouldn't be alive today to recount my story. In the eighties meningitis wasn't as recognised as it is today. I can still remember undergoing the scans to see which areas were affected and receiving the devastating news that my neck and spine were infected. I was overwhelmed with emotion; the sensation of only being able to move my eyes, and nothing else was terrifying. "You have no strength and need to eat" said the caring nurse, who couldn't hide the sympathy in her eyes. She explained that I needed to get the infection out of my body as quickly as possible or the consequences would be fatal.

My mum stayed with me at the hospital, unsure if I would pull through. After several long weeks I managed my first solid food; a blissful bag of chips... only to projectile vomit them back up for five solid minutes! Strangely, I felt as though all the bacteria left my body during this process. The next day, I started to move my neck. Within days I started to feel the rest of my body again and was fully discharged just a week later.

"Your immune system is extremely weak; try to build yourself back up again. Maybe take up sport?" advised the doctor upon discharge. With the doctor's words ringing in my ears I put my name down for every activity and sport I could when I started comprehensive school. My attitude was "I'm going to do it and do it good". I played hockey and football at high school level but at age 12 decided to focus on athletics as I loved running and was told I was good at it. Despite loving my new-found athleticism, the concern that I was putting my body under too much pressure remained a constant worry.

I completed in the 100 and 200m at a high standard, reaching a UK ranking in the top 15 in both events. I could have gone further I believe, if my health would have allowed me to push harder. Winter months especially, were excruciating as I couldn't breathe and would pick up cold viruses on top; I tried to push through but often my body would shut down.

In 2012 I started experiencing hip and knee troubles; I was lucky enough to be able to seek out private consultancy and was astounded to hear the news that I subsequently followed... "James, you need two new knees and a hip replacement" said the doctor bluntly. It emerged that years of overtraining had taken its toll. Devastated was an understatement, as it was sport that kept me going all those years ago. I tried to persist with running but the pain became unbearable and I had to stop. The only exercise I managed to maintain was resistance training, but lightweight and eccentric movements to try to minimise muscle wastage.

I started working as a store manager in retail and immersed myself in arduous 60 hour working weeks however only a few months after stopping sprinting, I was diagnosed with a severe case of glandular fever.

***The doctor advised;
"Your immune
system is extremely
weak; try to build
yourself back up
again. Maybe
take up sport?"***

Reminiscent of my childhood ordeal, I couldn't speak or move my neck, it felt like history was repeating itself. My partner came around to check on me and immediately called an ambulance. My body was shutting down again and couldn't cope with the trauma. I was in a state of shock and wondered how much more my body could take.

Cue another lengthy hospital stay; eight weeks confined to a hospital bed. I was forced to leave my job as recovery would be a slow process and lost my home, my car and all my savings; just trying to keep a roof over my head. My world was upside down again- I couldn't believe it! I made the decision to move back in with my parents as I needed looking after fulltime.

PHOTO: REBECCA ANDREWS



I had only just met my partner, so I didn't want to put on her. I had always worked tirelessly for everything in life but accepted that I was unable to look after myself. My weight plummeted to eight stone due to being unable to have solid food for eight weeks. Three years of no training passed and became startlingly apparent on my gaunt body; my waist measured 26 inches with 10-inch arms and 16-inch legs. As somebody who had always trained, the thought of starting all over again was devastating but I knew I had the resolve to build myself back up again, I just needed to listen to my body.

I moved to Leicester and started back in the gym, enlisting the help of coach Zac Fotheringham, I loved training so much that I even did a level three PT course. A few years passed of incorporating a decent training regimen and I had made some great gains; things were finally on the up, however unbeknownst to me, another catastrophe was looming. In October 2015, I suffered a tragic car accident. I experienced extensive ligament and muscle damage to my arms, neck, back and knees; but was I was lucky to be alive. Twelve months of intense physio followed with huge weight loss once again. I was fed up: "Wow! Can't I just have a break" I thought in a state of absolute melancholy. My confidence hit an all-time low; it had taken me so long to get back into shape. Doctors advised me to

stop training legs altogether "it will do more harm than good" they warned sternly. This was the most painful obstacle to overcome as training legs in one way or another was always my means of keeping my mental health in check.

After rehab nothing was clicking; I got back in touch with my old coach Zac, I needed someone to push me, and his no bullsh*t approach was exactly what I wanted. We set up a transformation programme; starting all over again and have been working hard at it for the last 16 months. I'm determined to not be beat! Results have been promising despite just being checked for thyroid, prolactin and testosterone levels due to gaining lots of fat on a calorie controlled diet and not feeling right in myself.

Just recently, my mum passed away; it was a huge shock and hit me and my family very hard. She was a massive influence in driving me to do better and not letting things get to me. She was responsible for my 'hard work pays off' attitude and has helped me over the years to realise that I want to help others reach their goals. I have just qualified in level three sports massage and Hijama cupping and aim to set up a gym in the Leicestershire area to inspire others to be the best versions of themselves. **M&F**

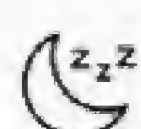
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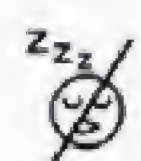


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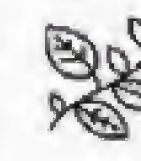
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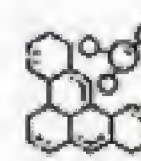
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FOUNDER KEITH HALL SAYS:



“Around 2013, I noticed that so many people were running with their phones in their hands, stuffed in their bra or waistband, in a bulky armband or just placing them on the floor while they did their reps. I tried many of the solutions myself and found them more than underwhelming, so I came up with a better solution- the SlimClip Case by theWTFactory (Wonderful Things Factory). Unlike the other clip cases, the SlimClip Case is thin, low profile, aesthetically complimentary to modern mobile phones, but most importantly fits snugly and securely to your waist while working out or running no matter if you are right side up or upside down.”

- No more fitness armbands that are too tight or too loose and constantly requiring adjustments.
- No more struggling to get your phone out of a fannybelt that keeps riding up onto your stomach and getting soppy wet with sweat. **M&F**



ASK THE SEXPERT



CHEATERS NEVER PROSPER!

*So you want to cheat? **Things you should know!***

So, here I was sitting at the local coffee shop, halfway through this month's article having received some rather entertaining readers' questions when I spotted an overly frisky couple tucked away in the corner. Now, I absolutely LOVE people watching. Behavioural psychology and body language analysis is one of my most favourite things. From the obvious "look at me, look at me" attention grabbers to the subtle nuances of micro gestures that can precede speech. It's great to watch courting rituals in public. I guess I am a self-confessed voyeur of sorts!

Now one doesn't need to be an expert to work out what the female party was insinuating when she scooped some foam from her cup using TWO fingers, then sucked them clean in a manner that had me needing an immediate trouser shuffle to accommodate the latte grande brewing in my boxers!

I smiled, he drooled and she fellated her fingers. Good times...and with that I decided to ditch the article I was writing and talk about the dynamics of cheating instead. Do you blame me!?

Cheating, infidelity, being unfaithful. Word it how you will. Irrespective of the nature of your actions, be it a one night stand, long-term affair or convincing yourself that it's just a "textual" exchange. The underlying truth is. You'll have a lot to think about. Namely, getting caught!

Now I shall be very clear from the off. I'm not here to pass any sort of moral judgement. But I will attempt to provide some useful introspective.

So first we need to ask the ask the question. Why cheat?

You entered into a relationship and your partner gradually or suddenly changed their dynamic. If my favourite restaurant stops serving me steak and chips and tries to fob me off with a tofu salad, trust me, I'm gonna eat elsewhere. If all elements of a relationship were viewed as a business agreement, this would be false advertising. The same goes for if one's partner lets themselves go physically out of sheer complacency. I've lost count of the number of times I've heard people tell me they're married now so there's no point in working hard to look good. FFS. Have some dignity and self-respect!

We base our prospective futures on the honeymoon period. It's all magic and sparkles to start. She makes an effort to wear things that'll allure you, makeup, perfume, all the crazy shit you've ever wanted in bed and you, sir, are now sold to this idea of who you think she is!.. Then gradually, the short white skirt morphs into nasty baggy tracksuit bottoms, she loses her hair brush and she's having a period three times a week, whilst you're spending the days speculating if there'll be an unfulfilling five-minute round of missionary before she pre-emptively tells you she has a headache of some description and goes to bed. Thank God for the internet right?! Don't get me wrong! Guys are just as bad. It's the football, festering on the sofa over some pointless computer game, lads' night out drinking, gaining a beer belly and not recognising that you actually have a woman who could verrrry easily get another guy to pay her ALL the attention you ain't! News flash fellas: you

think it's just guys that have the capacity to cheat? Women are so much smoother at this game. I mean like, SILKY smooth! She could be getting all sorts of "D" in her face whilst your dumb-ass is too distracted to notice as you're more excited that you just made it to the next level of GTA. When women tell me what brought them to that point and how their men behave, I don't blame them either.

If you are going to play away, be it an unplanned spontaneous quickie or long-term affair, there are a few very important elements to ensure you take heed of:

Don't catch anything!

Make sure this is what you really want. You can't undo something like this and the more you do it, the more habitual it becomes and before you know it. You've become a serial cheater and rather than make the effort to resolve differences or to fix a problem you'll be looking for unsustainable quick fixes.

So. Things to consider!

Have a very solid alibi. Plan your game. Delete phone records and messages. Pay by cash. Play outside of your neighbourhood. Ask yourself a million questions as you never know what might come up. Have a few very reliable friends who know and you can trust. Don't get too emotionally involved or it goes from being a bit of fun to you being a creepy mistake. Have a change of clothing. Sweep for hair. Avoid marks, slaps, bites, scratches! Don't leave anything behind. If you do film it, get rid of it afterwards! Don't let it affect the dynamic you have at home, it'll arouse suspicion. Make a VERY clear differentiation between home life and the 'other' one.

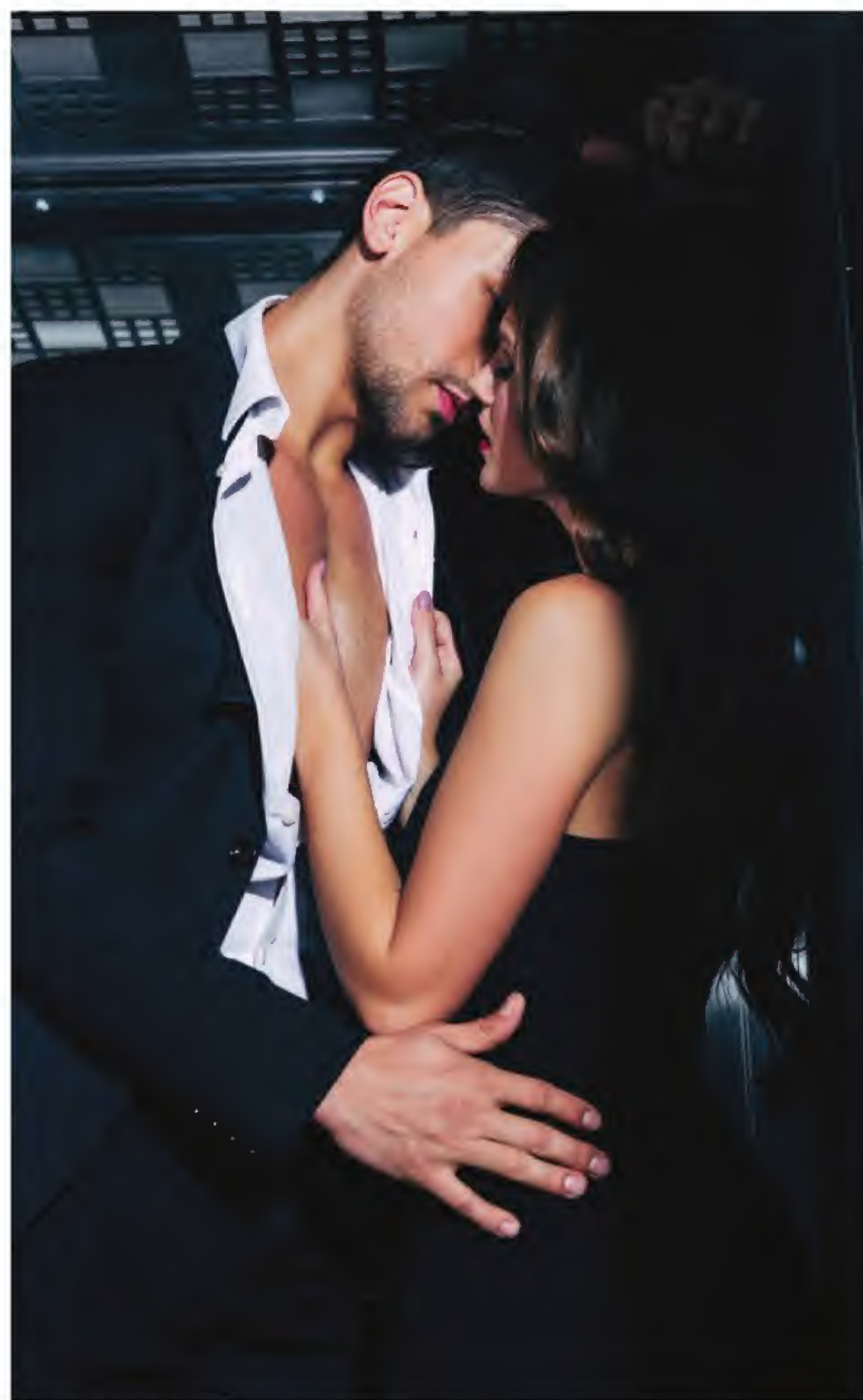
Is it worth it? Not for me to say. Just ensure the other participant isn't a psycho!

Who's better in bed?

Bodybuilder, CrossFitter or Fighter!

Right, let's damage some egos!

Bodybuilders: Big, strong and pretty much most of the time with elevated testosterone levels which gives them a very unique edge. They exude alpha male dominance and are the most eye catching human specimens out there. But the sheer nature of the sport means that most have by far the worst athletic stamina that I've seen in any discipline. Cardio? As long as it's slow



pace to avoid tapping into those gains. Any partner hoping for an extended hammering is going to be left feeling rather disappointed as Mr bodybuilder will be more focused on the next meal and out of breath!

CrossFitter: These guys have MEGA, mega stamina, strong and great athletic bodies....and allegedly the pinnacle of shit form! So although they'll be able to hammer away, the inherent lack of grace and rhythm is akin to a misfiring jackhammer!

Fighter: Not the strongest but ferocious stamina and aesthetically pleasing, yet not necessarily always perfect. We... I mean, "they" have a never give up attitude similar to the crossfitter, BUT, as martial arts require very strict form and discipline, agility and humility to get things perfect, you know form and rhythm are always going to be on point. Now consider most fighters cross train across various disciplines such as bodybuilding and strength training you can be assured those testosterone benefits we spoke about earlier are going to be through the roof too. Haters gonna hate! **M&F**

Instagram: @komie.h



FODMAPING FOR BODYBUILDERS: GET YOUR GUT ONSIDE

(fermentable oligosaccharides, disaccharides, monosaccharides, and polyols)

Introduction

When it comes to bodybuilding, we want to maximise lean muscle growth, muscle size and muscle density. Alongside resistance-based training, this is achieved via the intake, digestion and absorption of sufficient macronutrients and micronutrients to help repair and build muscle tissue whilst providing energy for exercise and everyday life. This process therefore relies heavily on the function and condition of our gut to effectively breakdown, digest and absorb foods we consume. When problems begin to occur within the gut it can cause disruption of optimal nutrient absorption, affecting our overall progress with building quality dense muscle tissue. These problems normally come in the form of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), a problem that currently affects 7-15% of the general population⁽¹⁾. IBS is a common issue that can cause a range of “functional symptoms” from within the gastrointestinal tract (GI), such as luminal distension (causing abdominal pain,

visible bloating and visible distention), alteration in bowel movements (increase colon osmolality causing loose and more frequent stools) and an increase in gas production (affecting bloating and increasing flatulence)⁽²⁾.

Gut Microbiome

These functional symptoms of IBS and underlying issues with digesting and absorbing nutrients could be due to a lacking gut microbiome. The term – gut microbiome – simply refers to the composition and make up of our gut ‘microbial genome’, essentially these are the vast variety of bacteria & bacterial genes within our GI tract, of which there are trillions, that are responsible for breaking down our daily foods and according to some research, encoding our metabolic capabilities⁽³⁾. A lack of diverse “good gut bacteria” could result in an inability to digest particular types of foods and more commonly, carbohydrates e.g. monosaccharides, disaccharides and polysaccharides.

What does this mean for us?

So, what does this all mean for us as bodybuilders? Well, as a population, bodybuilders generally consume more than the average person (more carbohydrates, protein, fats and vegetables). Consequently, the stress on our GI tract to digest and absorb nutrients is even greater, and as such could cause/ exacerbate existing deficiencies and potential IBS functional symptoms. Our gut is also connected to our brain via the brain-gut axis⁽⁵⁾, and as such the gut is responsible for partial thyroid hormone conversion of T4 to T3. Bacteria within the GI tract are responsible for producing an enzyme that converts up to 20% of T4 to T3 hormones that are essential for stimulating our metabolism. Inflammation and IBS within our gut can cause brain-gut axis dysregulation, causing a decrease in T4 to T3 conversion which ultimately may slow down metabolism. If left untreated, this could lead to long-term problems with digestion; meaning daily insufficient nutrient uptake, constant abdominal discomfort, irregular bowel movements, lack of progress with regard to building muscle, worsened sleep, heightened stress, decrease in metabolism leading to weight gain/ more difficulty losing weight and as a result decreased muscle synthesis, growth and repair. It is evident then, that the importance of treating functional symptoms of IBS and inflammation is paramount to building healthy dense muscle.



LOW FODMAP	HIGH FODMAP
VEGETABLES AND LEGUMES	
Bamboo shoots Bean sprouts Broccoli Cabbage, common and red Carrots Celery (less than 5cm stalk) Chick peas (1/4 cup max) Corn (1/2 cob max) Courgette Cucumber Aubergine Green beans Green pepper Kale Lettuce e.g. butter, iceberg, rocket Parsnip Potato Pumpkin Red peppers Spring onions (green part) Squash Sweet potato Tomatoes Turnip	Garlic Onions Aparagus Beans e.g. black, broad, kidney, lima, soya Cauliflower Cabbage, savoy Mange tout Mushrooms Peas Spring onions (white part)
FRUIT	
Bananas, unripe Blueberries Cantaloupe Cranberry Clementne Grapes Melons e.g. honeydew, Galia Kiwi fruit Lemon Orange Pineapple Raspberry Rhubarb Strawberry	Apples Apricot Avocado Bananas, ripe Blackberries Grapefruit Mango Peaches Pears Plums Raisins Sultanas Watermelon
MEAT AND SUBSTTTUTES	
Beef Chicken Lamb Pork Quorn mince Cold cuts e.g. ham and turkey breast	Chorizo Sausages Processed meat (check ingredients)
Low FODMAP Food Chart - www.IBSDiets.org	



IBS Treatment - FODMAP

One of the most successful therapies for the treatment of IBS has found to be through manipulating our dietary intake. Manipulating our diet to have a lower intake of fermentable oligosaccharides, disaccharides, monosaccharides, and polyols (FODMAP) food has been shown to significantly decrease symptoms of IBS (abdominal pain, bloating and flatulence). FODMAP foods refer to a particular type of dietary carbohydrates that are classed as “fermentable” due to a lack of hydrolase enzymes within the gut to break them down or incomplete absorption in the small intestine⁽⁵⁾. FODMAPs are short chain carbohydrates such as fructose (in excess of glucose), fructans, sorbitol, mannitol and lactose (fruits, onions, wheat, legumes & dairy) (Marsh, 2016) that due to insufficient microbiome are poorly digested by the lower intestine – termed malabsorption – causing rapid luminal fermentation in the colon, increasing gas production (hydrogen & carbo dioxide)⁽⁶⁾ and gut osmolality leading to the previously mentioned functional systems of IBS. Research has established^(1,2,7) that low FODMAP diets have been shown to be very successful in alleviating the vast majority of IBS symptoms by excluding/ restricting food sources composed of these short chain carbohydrates that cause us trouble. The first evidence of this was in 2006, a study⁽⁶⁾ showed that within a population of individuals that reported symptoms of IBS and showed signs of malabsorption of fructose, after following a diet restricting fructose and fructans

intake 74% of the sample reported alleviated IBS functional symptoms. Following this, research has displayed evidence that high FODMAP diets aggravate symptoms of IBS via increased volume of fermented hydrogen and liquid transported to the proximal colon⁽¹⁾. Since then, research has invested time into food composition analysis⁽⁷⁾ to build a comprehensive list of high and low FODMAP foods.

How to use this

For individuals who suffer from functional symptoms of IBS using the information to inform your dietary intake could, according to current research findings, aid to reduce symptoms of IBS. However, whilst this list is extensive it is worth noting that in some cases, particular low FODMAP foods can become high FODMAP if eaten in high quantities. Without manipulating your diet to only include low FODMAP foods, some quick and easy steps you could take are; first, eliminate onions and garlic from your diet altogether, avoid fruit juices/ fruit salads and do not consume any processed foods e.g. takeaways, ready meals and/ or cured meats (processed foods hold little to no nutritional value and can increase inflammation of the gut, exacerbating IBS or even lead to IBD). To effectively keep up to date with FODMAP foods and low FODMAP meal ideas I recommend using the Monash Uni Low FODMAP Diet App.

To implement these changes into your diet, you may find trying everything at once too restricting. It is rare

we can sustain dramatic changes to our daily dietary practices without periods of regression or indulgence. Instead, using the information to implement an elimination diet may be the best method- select a variety of foods and eliminate them from your diet for a period of 1-2 weeks and note any changes or alleviation of IBS. Following this, slowly re-introduce foods one by one and keep a note of any change to IBS symptoms/ feelings that may occur thus highlighting any potential “trigger foods” to keep away from. Individuality is worth noting here you may find you can tolerate some higher FODMAP foods but not others- everyone is different and have their own selection of foods they can and cannot tolerate.

Conclusion

With the goal of building quality lean muscle, our gut health is paramount to getting everything we can out of the foods we eat. The state of our gut microbiome directly impacts how effectively we digest and absorb vital nutrients needed for energy, growth and repair and hormone balance. Any deficiency in the microbiome can lead to inflammation and symptoms of IBS, impairing our ability to build muscle and function happily and comfortably on a day-to-day basis. Utilising a low FODMAP diet can be instrumental in getting a handle of symptoms of IBS and optimising our gut health and function to maximise muscle synthesis potential. Looking to supplement with pre/ pro-biotics may also help with promoting an ideal gut environment ready for nutrient digestion and absorption. **M&F**

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LOW FODMAP	HIGH FODMAP
BREADS, CEREALS, GRAINS AND PASTA	
Oats Quinoa Gluten free foods e.g. breads, pasta Savoury biscuits Buckwheat Chips/ crisps (plain) Cornfour Oatmeal (1/2 cup max) Popcorn Pretzels Rice; basmati, brown, white Tortilla chips	Barley Bran Cous cous Gnocchi Granola Muesli Muffins Rye Semolina Spelt Wheat foods e.g. bread, cereal, pasta
NUTS AND SEEDS	
Almonds (max of 15) Chestnuts Hazelnuts Macademia nuts Peanuts Pecans (max of 15) Poppy seeds Pumpkin seeds Sesame seeds Sunflower seeds Walnuts	Cashews Pistachio
MILK	
Almond milk Coconut milk Hemp milk Lactose-free milk Oat milk (30ml max) Rice milk (200ml max) Soya milk made with soy protein	Cow milk Goat milk Sheep milk Soy milk made with soy beans
CHEESE	
Brie Camembert Cheddar Cottage cheese Feta Mozzarella Parmesan Swiss	Cream cheese Ricota cheese
DRINKS	
Beer (one max) Coffee, black Drinking chocolate powder Herbal tea (weak) Orange juice (125ml max) Peppermint tea Water Wine (one max)	Coconut water Apple juice Pear juice Mango juice Sodas with HFCS Fennel tea Herbal tea (strong)
Low FODMAP Food Chart - www.IBSDiets.org	

PREP KITCHEN

Here at Prep Kitchen we like to think of ourselves as the meal prep experts. Day in day out we develop delicious macro-friendly recipes that our team of professional chefs cook, blast chill and portion to the gram.

We are passionate about meal prep and the success it brings to everyone, so we've put together a few of our favourite recipes for you to begin your meal prep journey at home.

Our first recipe is a delicious bircher muesli, the perfect kick-start to your morning with a protein shake. Next up we've got a chicken pesto pasta, a tasty and easy dish to prepare for the week ahead. Then we've upped the wow factor (and the flavour) with our crowd-pleasing peri-peri chicken.

To test out our service for yourself, and see what we can do for you, use the code **FLEX20** for **20% off** your first order.

BIRCHER MUESLI

MAKES: 5

NUTRITIONAL INFO:

313 calories
8g protein
52g carbs
9g fat

INGREDIENTS:

- 600ml almond milk
- 50g dried cherries
- 1 tsp chia seeds
- 25g lemon juice
- 25g maple syrup
- 300g oats
- 30g pumpkin seeds

METHOD

1. Mix all the ingredients together thoroughly.
2. Portion and place in the fridge for 24 hours+
3. Enjoy!





CHICKEN PESTO PASTA

MAKES: 10

NUTRITIONAL INFO:

527 calories / 42g protein
32g carbs / 25g fat

INGREDIENTS:

For the pesto:

- 100g fresh basil
- 15g (2 cloves) garlic
- 150g olive oil
- 25g parmesan
- 50g pine nuts
- 5g sea salt

For the vegetable mix:

- 250g courgette
- 400g green peppers
- 400g red peppers
- 400g yellow peppers
- 150g red onion
- 30g olive oil
- 4g dried rosemary
- 2g sea salt

Pasta:

- 400g whole wheat pasta

Chicken Breast:

- 1.4kg chicken breast

METHOD

1. Dice the vegetables and chicken.
2. Add 30g olive oil to a pan, fry the diced mixture until soft. Add the chicken and cook thoroughly. Place to one side to cool.
3. While the veg and chicken cooks, cook your whole wheat pasta according to the packet instructions. Then leave to cool. The quicker the better.
4. Blitz pesto ingredients together.
5. Mix the cooled pasta, veg, chicken and pesto together. Then portion into 10 tubs ready to eat or freeze for later!



PERI-PERI CHICKEN



MAKES: 10

NUTRITIONAL INFO:

547 calories / 41g protein
42g carbs / 23g fat

INGREDIENTS:

Sauce:

- 50g olive oil
- 20g rapeseed oil
- 60g red pepper
- 15g onion
- 10g garlic
- 1 red chilli
- 1 red Birdseye chilli
- 1 green Birdseye chilli
- ½ tsp smoked paprika
- ¼ tsp paprika
- 15g lemon juice

- 5g distilled vinegar
- Pinch dried rosemary
- Salt & pepper (to taste)

Chicken:

- 1.25kg chicken breast

Garlic Sweet Potato

Wedges:

- 90g rapeseed oil
- 60g garlic
- 30g flat leaf parsley
- 1.3kg sweet potato
- Salt & pepper (to taste)

Posh Peas:

- 500g shelled broad beans
- 50g lemon juice
- 25g flat leaf parsley
- 300g petits pois

- 600g peas
- 40g olive oil
- 50g red chilli
- 25g fresh mint
- Sea salt

METHOD

1. Blitz all the sauce ingredients together.
2. Slice chicken breast. Pour half of the sauce onto the sliced chicken and place in the oven at 180°C until cooked. Pull chicken from the oven and leave to cool, then coat the chicken with the rest of the sauce.
3. Slice sweet potatoes into wedges. Add diced garlic and rapeseed oil, cook in oven at 180°C for 40 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Wait until cooked then scatter with flat leaf parsley.
4. Drop peas into boiling water for a few minutes (broad beans and petit pois can be replaced with more garden peas to make this dish easier), then drain. Mix with lemon juice, olive oil, diced red chilli, and chopped up mint and parsley. Then season to taste.
5. Portion up & enjoy!



A top-down photograph of a rustic wooden surface. On the surface are several fresh vegetables: a large green apple, a head of broccoli, two red tomatoes, and a stalk of asparagus. A yellow measuring tape is draped across the right side of the frame, showing measurements in inches and centimeters. The lighting is warm, highlighting the textures of the wood and the freshness of the produce.

FOOD SWAPS TO GET **SWOLE**

Swapping your food is a great way of becoming more aware of what you are eating, discovering new food choices and ultimately, becoming healthier. Many snacks and food choices contain high amounts of calories that we are unaware of, adding up and impacting our energy levels, body fat and general wellbeing.

National gym provider Anytime Fitness has over 160 locations across the UK and actively supports its members in helping form healthier habits at home with nutrition advice to complement their in-gym training. Rather than recommending tough and often unsustainable diets, they provide tips on how to make small, manageable changes which add up to make a big difference.

Marvin Burton, Anytime Fitness' Head of Fitness, provides his recommended methods and food swaps which are both simple, tasty and healthy!

1) CRISPS FOR NON-SWEETENED POPCORN

Reducing your salt and sugar intake in one swoop; if you have cravings for crisps or enjoy a snack whilst binging on the sofa, non-sweetened popcorn is a hidden gem.

2) MILK CHOCOLATE FOR DARK CHOCOLATE

If chocolate is your go-to treat, dark chocolate is higher in cocoa and therefore has more antioxidants and less sugar. Other benefits include you eating less due to darker chocolate (over 85%) being more filling and will simultaneously satisfy your craving much quicker than milk chocolate.

3) BISCUITS FOR RICE CAKES

Again, the sugar content of most biscuits will lead to cravings and binge eating. A rice cake has

PHOTOGRAPH BY BIGSTOCK

significantly less calories. If you want something tasty on your rice cake, try cottage cheese or natural peanut butter!

Snack Swaps

Nuts and seeds are a perfectly healthy snack to incorporate. They're high in healthy fats, fibre and protein. This gives you all the building blocks for better recovery, improved digestion and overall functionality of your body. Try not to overeat though! A handful of nuts should be enough for a snack. Avoid salted, roasted, honey roasted, or chocolate covered nuts, where possible.

Sustainability

Prepare food in advance

This will prevent you buying snacks and fast food on the move. This also prevents poor food choices and rushed decisions.

Variation

Although it may be easy to eat the same thing each day try not to. Our bodies need a variety of nutrients. Rotate your food regularly for optimal results and self-satisfaction from food.

Start with one thing

Most people decide to be 'healthy' overnight! This is the wrong approach. It should be part of natural life and a habit which is formed and maintained. They say it takes 21 days to form a habit so begin by making one or two changes only per week. If you can stick to it consistently, add another change. Remember that overloading yourself with new changes becomes too overwhelming and hard to maintain.

To find out more about Anytime Fitness and to register for a free trial at your local club, visit www.anytimefitness.co.uk/2019 M&F

PEANUT BUTTER RECIPES TO GO NUTS FOR



Peanut butter dishes to warm the soul and make you swole? You butter believe it! Check out these tasty treats from Meridian Foods.

Banana Cashew Bread

A delicious cakey loaf, packed with nutty goodness, that's a real crowd pleaser and easy to make.

Serves: 10

Preparation time: 25 minutes

Cooking time: 1hr 20 minutes

Ingredients:

- 100ml nut oil • 2 ripe bananas, mashed
- 150ml natural yoghurt • 3 medium eggs
- 50g Meridian smooth cashew butter
- 225g unrefined demerara sugar
- 225g self-raising flour • 100g raisins
- 50g cashew nuts, chopped
- Additional 20g Meridian smooth cashew butter

Method:

1. Grease and line a 2lb loaf tin and preheat the oven to 160°C.
2. Beat together the oil, banana, yoghurt, eggs and cashew butter. In a separate bowl combine the sugar, flour, raisins and cashews.
3. Stir the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients until it's well combined.
4. Tip the mixture into the prepared tin. Melt the additional 20g of cashew butter in the microwave or on the hob until just runny. Drizzle it over the cake mix and swirl with the tip of a knife or a skewer.
5. Bake in the middle of the oven for 1hr 20 minutes or until an inserted skewer comes out clean. Cool in the tin for 15 minutes then turn out and allow to cool completely before cutting.



Photo Credits: www.meridianfoods.co.uk



**COOK'S TIP:**

If you don't have enough carrot tops for the pesto then make up any shortfall with coriander. The pesto will keep in the fridge in a sealed container for a week, use it on pasta, drizzle over fish or toss with roasted veg.

Photo Credits: www.meridianfoods.co.uk

Carrot, Coconut and Peanut Butter Soup with Carrot Top Pesto

Serves: 2 with pesto leftover **Takes:** 30 minutes

Ingredients:

For the soup:

- 1 tbsp sunflower oil
- 1 onion, peeled and roughly chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely grated
- 400g carrots with green leafy tops, peeled and chopped
- 3cm root ginger, finely grated
- 600ml vegetable stock
- 2 tbsp Meridian coconut & peanut butter

For the pesto:

- 40g pumpkin seeds • 70g parmesan, grated
- 1 clove garlic, roughly chopped
- 40g carrot tops, well washed
- 1 tbsp Meridian coconut and peanut butter
- ½ lemon • 180ml olive oil

Method:

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan and gently cook the onion for 5-8 minutes until it starts to soften. Add the garlic, carrots and ginger and stir well. Cook for two minutes then add the stock.
2. Bring to a simmer, season and cook for 15 minutes, with the lid on, until the carrots are soft. Stir in the nut butter then set aside to cool a little.
3. While the soup is cooking make the pesto. Toast the seeds in a dry frying pan until they begin to pop. Whizz the toasted seeds, parmesan, garlic, carrot tops, nut butter, lemon zest and juice along with half of the oil, in a food processor until you have a thick paste. As its whizzing, add more oil until it becomes a drizzling consistency.
4. Blend the soup until smooth, add more stock if it's too thick and check the seasoning. Reheat then ladle the soup into bowls and drizzle with pesto.

Cashew Butter and Honey Breakfast Muffins

Ingredients:

- 275g self raising flour
- 50g oats
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 100g sultanas
- 2 eggs
- 100g runny honey
- 2 bananas, mashed
- 100g Meridian cashew butter (smooth or crunchy)
- 50g butter, melted
- 200ml milk

Makes: 12 muffins

COOK'S TIP:

These muffins are perfect for breakfast in a hurry or as an addition to a sandwich box.

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C/ gas mark 5 and line a muffin tray with 12 paper muffin cases.
2. Mix the flour, oats, baking powder and sultanas in a large bowl and set aside.
3. In another bowl, beat the eggs, and then gently beat in the honey, mashed bananas, peanut butter, melted butter and milk. You'll end up with a gloopy liquid.
4. Make a well in the centre of the dry ingredients, tip in the wet ingredients and quickly combine. Don't over mix.
5. Spoon the mixture into the muffin cases and bake for 25-30 minutes, or until the tops are golden brown. Cool on a cooling rack.



**COOK'S TIP:**

Take one portion to work today and one tomorrow.

Photo Credits: www.meridianfoods.co.uk

Turmeric Cauliflower, Cashew and Red Rice Bowl

Serves: 2 **Takes:** 25 minutes

Ingredients:

- 350g cauliflower
- 1.5 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 tbsp Meridian crunchy cashew butter
- A squeeze of lemon juice
- 1 pack microwave red rice
- 2 spring onions
- 1 bag fresh salad leaves

Method:

1. Heat the oven to 200°C/ 180°C fan. Divide the cauliflower into bite-sized florets and put them

in an oven tray. Toss with half the oil, the turmeric and a good pinch of salt. Roast for 20 minutes until toasted and tender.

2. While the cauli is cooking, combine the remaining oil, Meridian crunchy cashew butter and lemon juice then season.
3. Cook the rice according to the pack instructions and finely slice the spring onions. Mix the spring onion into the rice.
4. Divide the salad bag between two lunch boxes or bowls top with the rice then the roast cauli. If you're taking this to work for lunch, pack the dressing separately and dress the salad before eating. Otherwise drizzle over and eat immediately. **M&F**

Date: What's In Your Diary?

[Mon] [Tue] [Wed] [Thu] [Fri] [Sat] [Sun]

Creator of the Crockfit app and **M&F** cover star Alex Crockford shares the diet that's responsible for his insta-famous physique...

70g Oats with 150ml unsweetened Almond Milk, 10g Chia Seeds, 50g Blueberries & 20g Micro Whey

1 Chicken Breast, 70g Broccoli, 5 Baby Plum Tomatoes, 100g Cucumber, 90g cooked Beetroot & ¼ Avocado

(Pre-workout) 15g Reflex Nutrition Muscle Bomb, 4 Thermo Fusion capsules

(Intra-workout) 15g Reflex Nutrition BCAA Intra Fusion

(Post-workout) 25g Reflex Nutrition Instant Whey Pro

1 Chicken Breast, 120g Quinoa & Wholegrain Rice & 70g Broccoli

Reflex Rbar Protein Bar & 15g Brazil Nuts

Grilled White Fish & Potato Mash

50g Oats with 150ml unsweetened Almond Milk & 1 square 85% Dark Chocolate

M&F Verdict: 10/10

Alex is a man after our own hearts with his double oats-fest! He says: "My nutrition is always quite varied, it's really important for me to enjoy my food as well as get all the nutrients I need to train hard, recover well and achieve the results in my physique I'm looking for. We all may have different nutritional approaches, but two key things to always prioritise is high protein, as well as filling your diet with real, natural, wholesome foods, limiting highly processed foods." Wise words indeed from the social media sensation. Alex aims for a round 2,500 calories to keep super lean year-round and adopts the little and often approach to ensure a steady supply of nutrients and optimum protein synthesis throughout the day. Grilled fish and chicken breasts are the gold standard of lean protein sources; it's a yes from us, plus the addition of healthy fats from the chia seeds, avocado and Brazil nuts will provide a multitude of health benefits. The sneaky daily serving of dark chocolate will help keep sweet cravings at bay plus the well-timed dose of magnesium it contains, alongside those satiating oats before bed, will help contribute to a restful night's sleep. In fact, we have nothing bad at all to say about this well-structured plan... it's a ten from us! **M&F**



PHOTO CREDIT: MATT MARSH

DEAD EASY

BY JON V WILLIAMS & BENEDIKT MAGNUSSON

@valgeirs_strengthtrips

It's the foundation of any strongman training plan, engaging every significant muscle in the body. But is your deadlift on point? Here, former WSM Jon V Williams breaks it down with the help of his good friend, deadlift world record holder Benedikt Magnusson.

PHOTOGRAPHS: GINTAS AND BEN
Facebook: Spartan Studio Productions
Instagram: @Spartanstudioproduction



DEAD EASY

Since man started walking on two feet, he needed to pick up heavy rocks, wood or people with both hands - so the deadlift is nothing new. But the form we use today is said to derive from the Romans who perfected it as a way to lift up the dead and wounded from the battlefield - hence the name. They hinged, loaded up the legs and lifted the corpse in one harmonious motion.

If you want to build brute strength or improve your sports performance, this is the one move you should add to your sessions. I try to include it every time, mixing up lighter weights and multiple reps to perfect form, or single lifts at max capacity. Either way, I know that when I'm training for a competition if my deadlift isn't right, nothing else will be either.

But don't just take it from me. My friend and fellow Icelandic Benedikt Magnusson holds the raw deadlift world record with a lift of an insane 460.4 kg and says:

"The deadlift is the most important move to perfect. Without it as a foundation, you'd never be able to lift atlas stones or sandbags, throw weight over a bar or flip tyres. Getting your form right is not easy, so take some time to set up correctly and try the following variations to keep switching things up for your body."



THE CLASSIC BARBELL DEADLIFT

THE SET-UP

The set up for the deadlift varies for each person but the basic principle is always the same. Stand close to the bar, screw your feet into the ground to activate your feet, legs and glutes, bend down and grab the bar with your hands along your knees, and then try to wrap the bar around you to activate your lats. Take a big breath in and sit back - getting your weight behind the bar makes

a huge difference so gravity doesn't carry the bar forwards and away from you. Lifting straight up is more efficient! Visualise pushing the ground away with your legs, then you are ready to lift.

THE LIFT

When in a braced position, drive your legs into the ground and simultaneously bring your chest up. When the bar reaches the top of your knees, drive your hips forward by squeezing your glutes with maximum effort. Make sure you stand fully erect with your shoulders back, rolling your shoulder blades towards your glutes.



DEADLIFT VARIATIONS

THE STRONGMAN BARBELL DEADLIFT

This is the same as a standard deadlift, but in competition the rules are very relaxed - lift the bar by any means possible. Pause if you need, wear straps on your hands, drive your knees under the bar - anything goes!





THE APPARATUS DEADLIFT

The apparatus deadlift covers many competition deadlifts and is great for audiences to watch because a fixed cage is filled with heavy objects, for example a car, kegs or tyres. Unlike lifting a barbell, the cage moves in a fixed incline, so your set-up needs to accommodate the trajectory of the bar.

TIP:

Stand slightly further away from the bar than normal to optimise bar path (you don't want the bar pushing into your shins or thighs). Really pull your weight back.

THE LIFT

Drive your feet into the ground and exaggerate the backward thrust as you straighten up.

THE SILVER DOLLAR DEADLIFT

When you start lifting super heavyweight, you can often lift more than can be loaded onto a traditional bar. Silver dollar bars often have cages into which weights can be piled high, or as the name suggests, buckets full of silver dollars. Often the bar is higher than a barbell placed on the ground, which can

make hefting all that weight slightly easier due to the higher starting point.

THE SET-UP:

It's crucial to be in the right starting position due to the fact the bar won't move until it leaves the ground. You want the movement with this discipline to be clean and smooth, so the weights don't swing around.



TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR FORM:

1 Bracing properly: Activate all the right muscles at the start of the lift. This means consciously thinking through your set-up. Screw in the feet, tighten the core and engage the glutes.

2 Align your jaw: It sounds surprising, but biting down on a specially designed mouth guard or even a stick can help you to adopt better posture for lifting, just ask Dr Adam Thorne from Harley Street Dentistry!

3 Practice, practice, practice: Don't hesitate to lower your weight to perfect your form. It's not all about hefting the biggest thing in the room! It's a marathon not a sprint.

AXLE BAR DEADLIFT

This deadlift is used in competitions to make the lifting a bit harder. Unlike a barbell, the axle bar has no rotation and the bar is thicker, so your centre of gravity moves further away. This often forces athletes to use straps and a mixed grip - one hand facing forward, one facing backwards.

PHOTOGRAPHS: GINTAS AND BEN

Facebook: **Spartan Studio Productions**

Instagram: **@Spartanstudioproduction**

EXAMPLE STRONGMAN COMPETITION TRAINING PROGRAMME

MEET GEORGE.

He weighs 85kg.

His best gym lifts are:

- Deadlift 210kg
- Clean/ Jerk 90kg
- Bench 105kg
- Log Lift 95kg
- Squat 175kg

He trains at the weekend for a forthcoming strongman competition with his boyfriend.

One of his competition events is deadlift for max. But George also needs to think of four other events to score well in.

An example beginner periodisation would be to spread the volume over three weeks to get a fully beneficial workout for static strength events, moving events, and stamina events every week without the risk of overtraining.



So, in the first week, George's deadlift workout would look something like this:

DEADLIFT WEEK 1 (WED):

- 60kg x 8
- 80kg x 8
- 4x (100kg x 5)

EVENTS TRAINING WEEK 1 (SAT):

- Yoke walk up to 120kg 10m
- Sled push 80kg 40m
- Log lift:
- 60kg x2
- 70kg x2
- 50kg x 5
- 50kg x 5

DEADLIFT WEEK 2 (WED):

- 60kg x 6
- 80kg x 6
- 100kg x 2
- 135kg x 2
- 4x (165kg x 2)

EVENTS TRAINING WEEK 2 (SAT):

- 2x (Bag carry 45kg 20m)
- One arm dumbbell press:
- 20kg x 5
- 30kg x 5
- 40kg x 2
- Log lift:
- 3x (60kg x 3)

DEADLIFT WEEK 3 (WED):

- 60kg x 5
- 8 x (75kg x 5)

EVENTS TRAINING WEEK 3 (SAT):

- Yoke walk/ pick up:
- 120kg 10m
- 180kg 10m
- 220kg 5m/ pickup
- Log lift:
- 50kg x 3
- 60kg x 1
- 70kg x 1
- 80kg x 1
- Bag carry:
- 50kg 10m
- 60kg 10m
- 2 x 70kg 15m



VIP TRAINING TRIP

Jon and Benedikt are hosting a VIP training trip to Iceland 12th-14th July. Participants will get to train with some of the world's best powerlifters and strongmen in the legendary Camelot and Thor's Power Gym as well as visit some of Reykjavik's most famous sights. Visit strengthtrips.com to book your place. **FLEX**

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EDIT BY: **JESS SPIRING**

MILOŠ ŠARČEV

THE MAN BEHIND THE PHYSIQUE

With over 20 magazine covers to his credit, titles in numerous countries, qualification for Mr. Olympia in his first pro show and the record for entries into bodybuilding contests at 72... Miloš Šarčev is a legend in every sense of the word!

Born on 17th January 1964 in Bečej, Serbia, he studied Nutritional Technology in the University of Novi Sad before moving to USA in 1987 to pursue his dreams. A glittering bodybuilding career awaited him in his chosen country starting off in 1989 where he won the Mr. Universe title, allowing him to become an IFBB professional in 1991.

His pro debut (the San Jose Pro Invitational) was to be his coming out party as he qualified for his first Mr. Olympia competition at the very first attempt! Known for being in contest shape year-round, Miloš had just raised the bar, demonstrating how an athlete needs to maintain their appearance on a year-round basis. With a new standard being set amongst IFBB professionals, Miloš was a man on a mission! Qualifying for Mr. Olympia is an achievement in itself but to qualify for ten consecutive years, is a true testament to just how good Miloš really was!

Once his competitive career had come to an end he didn't stop advancing and became known for coaching/advising professional athletes and future Olympic games medallists. As a nutritionist and strength and conditioning coach for Tim Montgomery, during the 'PROJECT WORLD RECORD' team, he went on to succeed in creating the fastest man alive by breaking the 100 meters world record with someone you may remember. A runner had achieved a time of 9.77 seconds. The man, Maurice Greene, achieved this amazing feat with less than nine months of Miloš' expert coaching!





Everybody has a contest prep guru or coach nowadays. You are constantly force-fed that someone needs to be getting you out of bed and walking you to the kitchen for your early morning protein and carbs meal or placing you on a treadmill for fasted cardio at 5am before tucking you back into bed at night or you can't possibly ever succeed. Sounds ridiculous right? Not if that man is Miloš Šarčev!

He popularised the term 'contest preparation guru' by being one of the first, and (arguably) best! He has prepared a ridiculously high level of competitors for numerous top IFBB competitions. The list which follows reads like a hall of fame call sheet: Mr. Olympia finalists, like: Nasser El Sonbaty, Flex Wheeler, James 'Flex' Lewis, Chris Cormier, Gustavo Badell, Dennis Wolf, Dennis James, Troy Alves, Sonny Schmidt, Richard Jones, Hidetada Yamagishi, Silvio Samuel, Tarek El Setouhi, Joel Stubbs, Luke Wood, Ben Pakulski, Kris Dim, Marius Dohne, Johnnie Jackson, King Kamali, Mustafa Mohammed, Alfonso Del Rio, Jari Mentula, Armin Scholz, Manuel Manchado, Ahmad Ahmad, Eddie Abbew, Ed van Amsterdam and so many more.

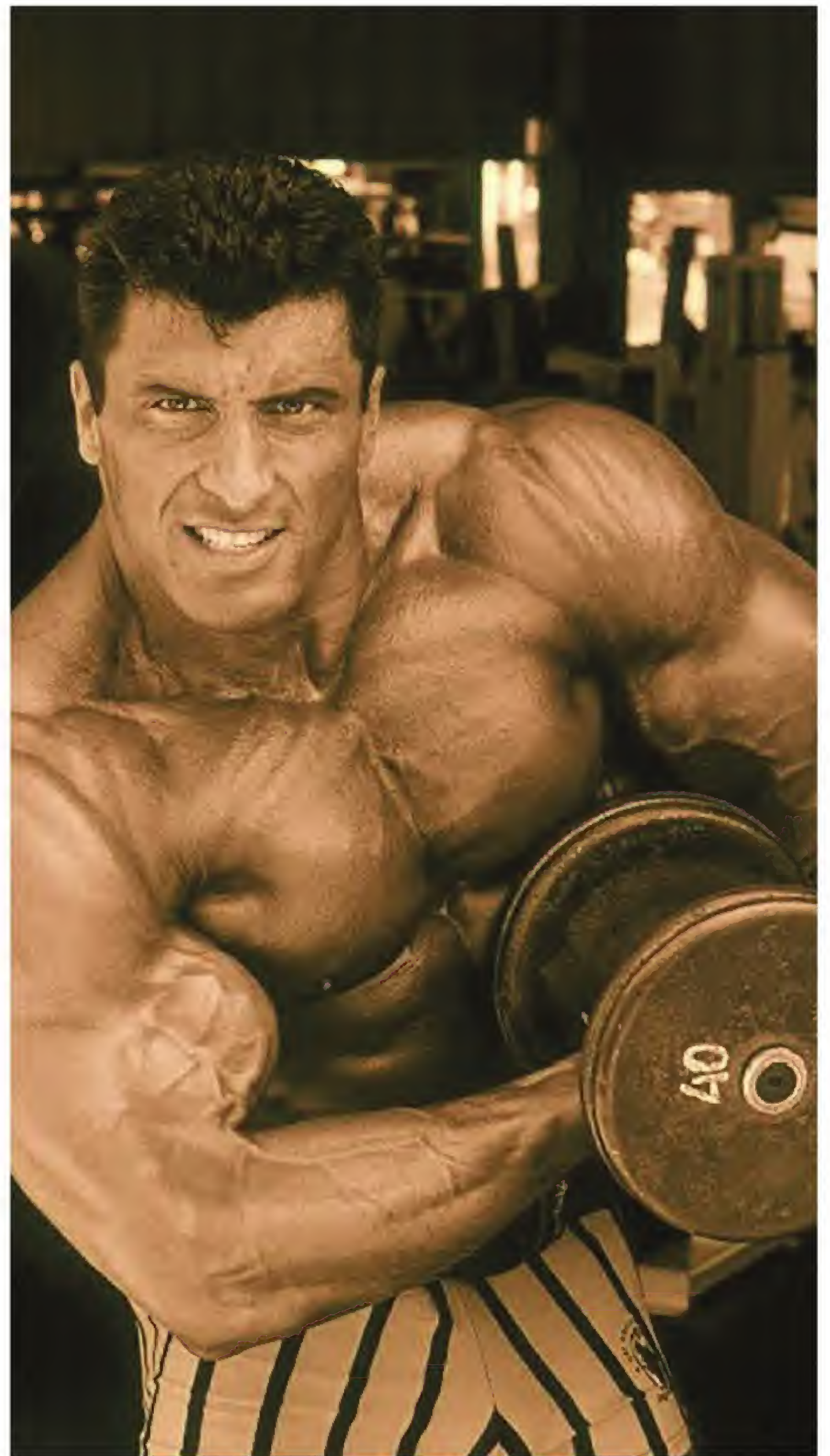
Before all that though, Miloš was always known for his excellent muscular proportion, aesthetic shape, balance, symmetry and conditioning (something that many would argue is missing from today's stages, in fact!). His presence on stage was one of perfection and detail. His posing routines were deep in the vein of Ed Corney (former IFBB pro), full of smooth transitions and artistic poses. On today's stages there is more of an emphasis on mass, sheer size, and bass thumping soundtracks to which the competitors shake, strain and contort themselves to!

THE TRAINING BEHIND THE LEGEND

Miloš' training routines and techniques have always been all about maximum stimulation of muscle fibres whilst utilising a wide variety of different training techniques, angles, grips, stances, range of motion, tempo...etc. basically everything you or I should be practising every time we wage war with the iron!

These routines and strategies consist of three major groups of movements.

- 1.** Compound exercises performed explosively and with heavy weight.
- 2.** Exercises with moderate weight and sets in the 8-12 repetition protocol.



- 3.** Multi-exercise sets that are performed one exercise after another with as little rest in-between sets as possible. These exercises stimulate type 1 slow twitch muscle fibres and type 2 a and b fast twitch muscle fibres.

He was also a pioneer of the intake of specific nutritional sport supplements pre, during and post training! All based on his 'HYPEREMIA ADVANTAGE PRINCIPLE TRAINING PRINCIPLES' (designed to allow a maximum increase of blood flow to the working muscles during the training).

His world class training routines have also been featured on Bodybuilding.com's Fit Show. He successfully launched his 'Miloš Šarčev's Signature Line - International Line of Supplements' which he sold from his website- www.milossarcev.com. These were class leading products designed with the ultimate results in the minimal amount of time in mind. If you're serious about your training and you train seriously, you need to supplement correctly! Miloš created these brands with that exact thought process!

Along with being a successful bodybuilder, coach/trainer Miloš wanted more and turned his eye to owning his first gym. KOLOSEUM GYM was destined to become the new mecca of bodybuilding, with the chain taking over the building that had originally housed GOLD'S GYM. Although going through a name change and new ownership, the GOLD'S GYM logo remained in various positions, reminding you that (although you were in Miloš' very own gym), to many it would always be GOLD'S GYM in Fullerton, California. Most people would want to completely wipe out a former business' identity when taking over with their own brand, but with the history that came with the building, why not embrace it? Miloš did just that!

"The gym itself is pretty cool and very hardcore, on two floors. With lots of equipment everywhere, it's a bodybuilder's training paradise where you can grunt, drop heavy weights, and be a true bodybuilder without having to get hassled by someone who doesn't like to see you sweat"

This was a real review left by a former member before the gym closed its doors with Miloš returning to Europe to continue his personal training business. World famous, the KOLOSEUM GYM logo adorned the pages of major magazines as hardcore workouts were blasted through and new champions were made under Miloš' banner. Even if you never realised it, I guarantee you

that Miloš' legacy has adorned your local gym at some point. Often filled with pros and former pros, this place was alive and kicking! Seminars and photo shoots were a regular occurrence. Walking in and seeing your heroes and idols going through their tortuous routines was enough to inspire you to train that much harder, and if you weren't that kind of lifter then kick back with an amazing protein fuelled smoothie and relax in one of the many pieces of training apparel that all featured the world famous KOLOSEUM logo!

Miloš top 3 choices of exercises for each muscle group are:

CHEST - flat barbell press, incline dumbbell press or flyes and decline flyes or dips

BACK - wide grip pull-ups (or pull-downs), bent over barbell row and dead lift

DELTS - overhead presses, side lateral dumbbell raises, bent over lateral raises with dumbbells

TRICEPS - close grip bench press, overhead triceps extensions, high pulley cable push downs

BICEPS - barbell curls, alternate dumbbell curls and preacher (Scott bench) curls

FOREARMS - reverse barbell curls, wrist curls - both with under and over grip



ABS - hanging leg raises, high pulley cable crunches and twists with the stick

QUADS - squats, hack squats (feet together), leg presses (feet apart)

HAMSTRINGS - stiff legged dead lift, laying leg curl, standing leg curl

CALVES - standing calf raises, donkey calf raises and seated calf raises

"I was a long time Weider athlete and contributing editor for FLEX magazine. Some of the other editors in that magazine gave me my nick name 'The Mind', due to my opinions in many aspects of training, nutrition and supplementation that often completely differed from the conventional" says Miloš.

THE INTERVIEW

FLEX: Can you explain how you first started training and what was key to you deciding you wanted to become a competitive bodybuilder?

M.S.: Like every boy from former Yugoslavia, I was always involved in sports and I learned to kick a ball and shoot a basketball before I learned to walk. However, it was martial arts that I found most interesting. I started karate when I was six and then practiced judo when I was eight and continued to train until I was seventeen. I was an absolute Bruce Lee fanatic, I had all his books, videos, movies, etc. I was first introduced to weightlifting as a part of strength training for judo. Of course, I immediately fell in love with the iron and started training up to four hours per day. Needless to say, I didn't improve due to overtraining, but the lack of results didn't discourage me. Instead it made me start doing research as to why I wasn't progressing, and I tried to learn everything that can be applied in bodybuilding. I was fortunate to be medically aware as both of my parents and my older sister were all medical professionals. My father, who was a doctor in the science of neuropsychiatry, influenced me the most and made me think. He gave me many unconventional yet very logical ideas that I have applied in my training, dieting and supplementation which made me improve dramatically. I developed my whole 'Hyperemia Advantage Theory' for maximal hypertrophy based on his teachings and that is something I shared with many successful top Olympia competitors throughout the years.

As far as pro bodybuilders who inspired me the most, I certainly would mention Frank Zane, Steve Reeves, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Serge Nubret and John Brown, who I was fortunate to watch perform in 1983 in Yugoslavia. I decided to become a competitive bodybuilder after seeing John's performance.

However, if I would have to single out one person then it would certainly be Frank Zane.

But... I would feel that I am not giving credit where credit is due if I didn't mention Bruce Lee, for being such an exceptional athlete, martial artist, philosopher and human being. Like him, I also observed everything, accepted what I found useful, discarded what I found useless and then created what was essentially my own training theory, nutritional regimens, supplementation protocols...etc.

Last, but not least, the person who certainly influenced me the most and made me who I am today is my father, Andjelko Sarcev, the greatest man I have ever known!

FLEX: You have been all over the world, competed at the highest level, graced the cover of magazines and won major championships. Purely in terms of competing, what do you feel was the highest point of your career?

M.S.: Qualifying for Mr. Olympia on my IFBB pro debut in 1991 San Jose IFBB Pro Invitational. Back in the day, placing in the top three in any IFBB professional show meant immediate qualification for Mr. Olympia and needless to say I never even thought I would be able to accomplish that task in my first year as a pro, let alone in my first IFBB Pro competition. Standing next to legendary Albert Beckles, and one of my idols John Brown and actually beating them in that contest was just unreal. Hundreds of pro bodybuilders dream about stepping on that Olympia stage and to many that dream never materialises, yet I succeeded in my very first try. Despite subsequently qualifying for ten consecutive Mr. Olympia competitions - my first one was by far the most gratifying.

FLEX: Subsequently which was the lowest?

M.S.: The lowest point of my career came the following year at my second Mr. Olympia competition (1992 in Helsinki Finland) when I got really sick just a couple of weeks before the show, lost a tremendous amount of weight and just looked horrible. Worst thing was that I had signed up for the European Grand Prix Tour right after and I had to compete six more times in less than acceptable condition, which was an absolute nightmare.

FLEX: Given you have competed at the highest levels in this sport, who would you say was your biggest competition?

M.S.: I was fortunate enough to step on the stage with one of the all-time greatest bodybuilders- Mr. Lee Haney at his last contest before his retirement in the 1991 Mr. Olympia in Orlando, Florida. He was (and still is) just most unbelievable person I have ever met in this industry.



A great bodybuilder and an even greater human being. He radiates positive energy and kindness and it is an absolute pleasure being around him. He inspired me to be kind and helpful to others (in this selfish sport).

I competed in the '90s - what many believe to be golden era of bodybuilding with great competitors such as Dorian Yates, Ronnie Coleman, Flex Wheeler, Kevin Levrone, Shawn Ray, Lee Labrada, Nasser El Sonbaty, Sonny Schmidt, Francis Benfatto, Vince Taylor, Charles Clairmont, Lee Priest, Chris Cormier, Paul Dillet and up and coming Jay Cutler, Dexter Jackson, Dennis James, Tony Freeman...etc. To be able to beat any of these great champions I always had to be at my best and considering that I was competing in practically every IFBB pro show that was organised in 1990s (I've entered 72 IFBB Pro shows total) I always had to be in great shape just to make the top six.

I was fortunate enough that with exception of Dorian, Flex and Shawn I managed to beat all the aforementioned greats at one time or another.

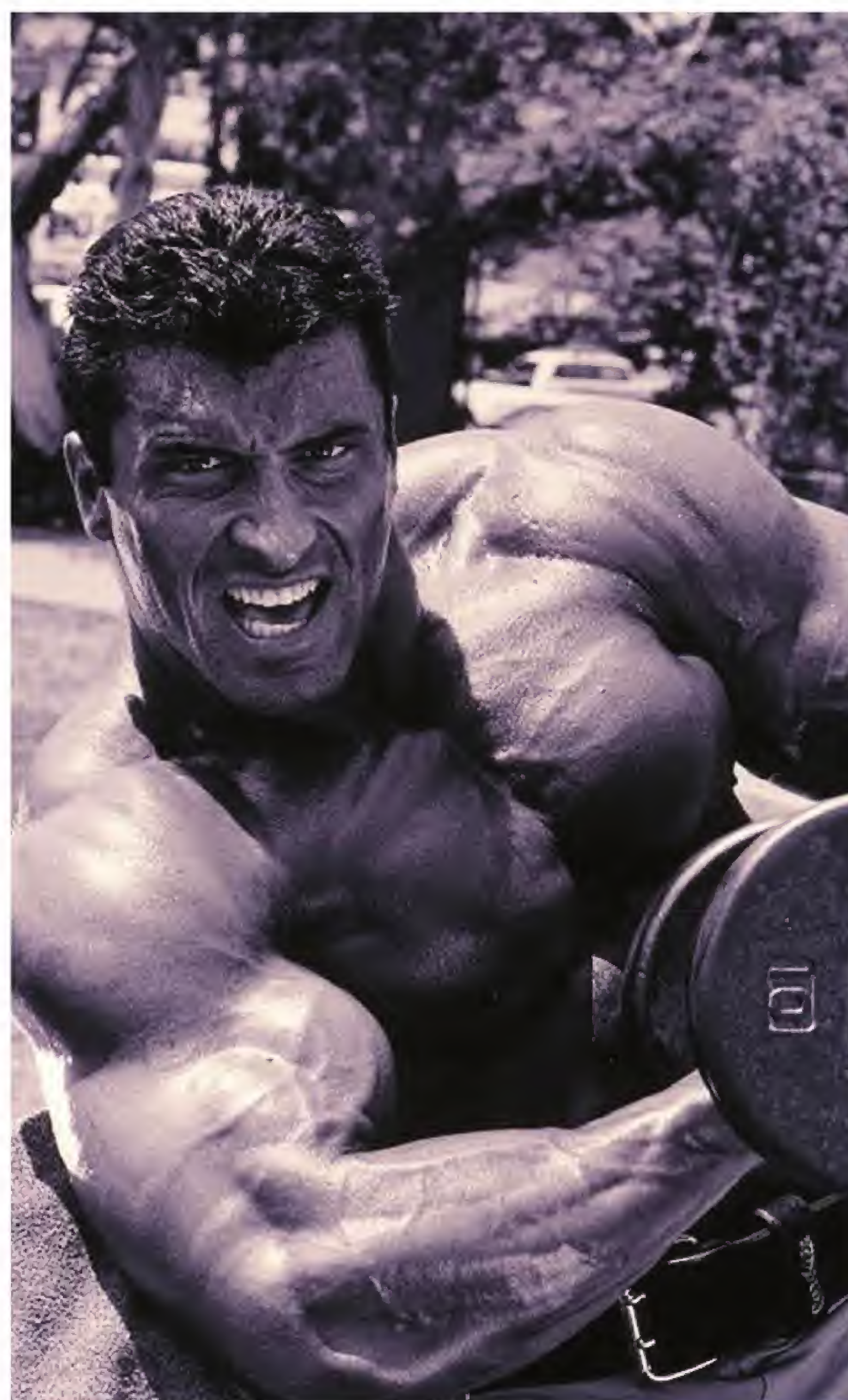
FLEX: How do you feel bodybuilding has changed since you began competing?

M.S.: Back in the '90s there were sooooo many great bodybuilders. Great physiques, aesthetics, symmetry, conditioning and muscularity; enough to make our sport attractive to watch. Also, back then competitors paid much more attention to their stage presence and posing routines. Then came Dorian and everything changed.

By no means would I even attempt to put down Dorian in any way. He was a revolutionary bodybuilding champion who was certainly different, and I very much respect him for his accomplishments and all the discipline and blood and guts, as he called it, to get him where he was; a six-time Mr. Olympia champ during the most competitive era of the sport. But, his shocking appearance at the 1993 Mr. Olympia, that mindboggling sheer size probably confused the judges and made them forget what the true judging criteria in bodybuilding should have been. Size and conditioning should NEVER be enough to beat the near physical perfection of many other great competitors.

From that moment on and almost all the way up until just recently, the most important factor in judging was conditioned size. All other aspects of judging criteria were completely forgotten. With Arnold publicly speaking about that after the 2015 Arnold Classic I do have hope that will change.

FLEX: Finally, since retiring you have opened your own world class gym, become a much sought-after personal trainer and designed and released your own supplement line. How 'hands on' were you



during the design and manufacture process of these products, and what were your goals and inspirations for wanting to take your career in these directions?

M.S.: After my retirement I started my coaching business and became a very successful 'contest preparation guru' after I made major transformations in very short period of time of some famous, seasoned pros. At the time I had Koloseum Gym in Fullerton that was becoming the new mecca of bodybuilding as many top pros came there to train with me. However, since I left the USA and relocated back to Europe, I continued mostly with my online coaching business, with some athletes still coming to Belgrade (Serbia) to train with me at 'Fitmania Personal Training Studio'.

I have also started my own 'Milos Sarcev's Signature Line' of sports supplements with the intention to bring the best quality supplements and different formulations, not available on the market, based on my Hyperemia Advantage System Theory. Many people know that I pioneered the intra-workout supplementation movement and they are still very loyal to my formulations. I want to bring my line to the US, and I hope I will succeed by the end of this year.

Whoever is interested in my supplements they can get more information at www.milossarcev.com.

Also, for competitors interested in contest preparation and online coaching - my best email is milos@milossarcev.com

www.milossarcev.com

Email for consulting : milos@milossarcev.com

Contact directly Milos Sarcev at milos.sarcev@hotmail.fi

<https://www.facebook.com/MilosAndjelkaSarcev>

<https://www.facebook.com/sarcev.milos>

TRAINING CAMPS

Experience Milos Sarcev "The Mind" world renown giant set training. 2-5-day Intensive training camps and lectures.

Day One

The Science of Hyperemia Advantage System

- 'Hyperemia Advantage Training System' design and exercise selection for maximal muscle fibre stimulation/ hypertrophy.
- Elevations of endogenous anabolic hormones during resistance exercise and enhancement of training-induced muscle hypertrophy.
- Specific pre/ during/ post-training supplementation for 'hyperemia' induced stimulation of muscle protein synthesis.
- 2 super intense training sessions.

Day Two

The Science of Muscle Growth

- Biomechanics of resistance training; training frequency and volume; exercise selection and order; training load and repetitions.
- Advanced training principles - heavy duty, giant sets, super slow, cluster training, pre /post exhaustion training, occlusion training, max-contraction, controlled contraction, isometrics, negatives, forced reps, static contractions, partial reps, power racks.
- Regional differences in muscle activation - utilisation of multiple exercises, various grips, stances, angles, tempo, range of motion and type of muscular contractions for maximal muscle stimulation.
- Exercise-induced fibre type transformation.
- Molecular responses to exercise; the variability in training-induced physiological skeletal muscle adaptation.
- 2 super intense training sessions.

Day Three

The Science of Sports Nutrition, Supplementation and Bioenergetics of Exercise and Training

- Macronutrients; micronutrients; fluid and electrolytes.
- Nutritional and caloric requirement and timing of specific nutrients and nutritional supplements for maximal hypertrophy and/ or maximal fat loss.
- How to evaluate the adequacy of the diet.
- Biological energy systems; metabolic specificity of training; substrate depletion and repletion.
- Substrate turnover during weight resistance training and metabolism of glucose, free fatty acids, and amino acids.
- RER (Respiratory Exchange Ratio); oxygen uptake and the aerobic and anaerobic contributions to exercise.
- Ketogenic, metabolic and anabolic diet.
- 2 super intense training sessions.

Day Four

The Science of Contest Preparation: Muscle Building Fat Loss

- Science of accelerated fat loss.
- Pre-competition nutrition; design of controlled anti-catabolic/ anabolic fat loss diet for maximal results.
- Metabolic boost diet specifics for sluggish metabolisms.
- Peaking contest preparation methods with specifics on glycogen, water and mineral depletion and loading manipulations.
- Pre-contest nutritional supplementation.
- 2 super intense training sessions.

Day Five

The Science of Endocrine/ Hormonal Responses to Resistance Training

- Primary anabolic hormones.
- Synthesis, storage, and secretion of hormones.
- Mechanisms of hormonal Interactions.
- Performance-enhancing ergogenic aids.
- Secrets of the pros; revealing top secrets of many Mr. Olympia competitors.
- 2 super intense training sessions.

FLEX can unreservedly say it was an honour and privilege to be given the opportunity to speak to someone as knowledgeable and successful as Miloš, and wish him all the best in his future endeavours. He truly is a LEGEND of this great sport. **FLEX**

The REBUILD

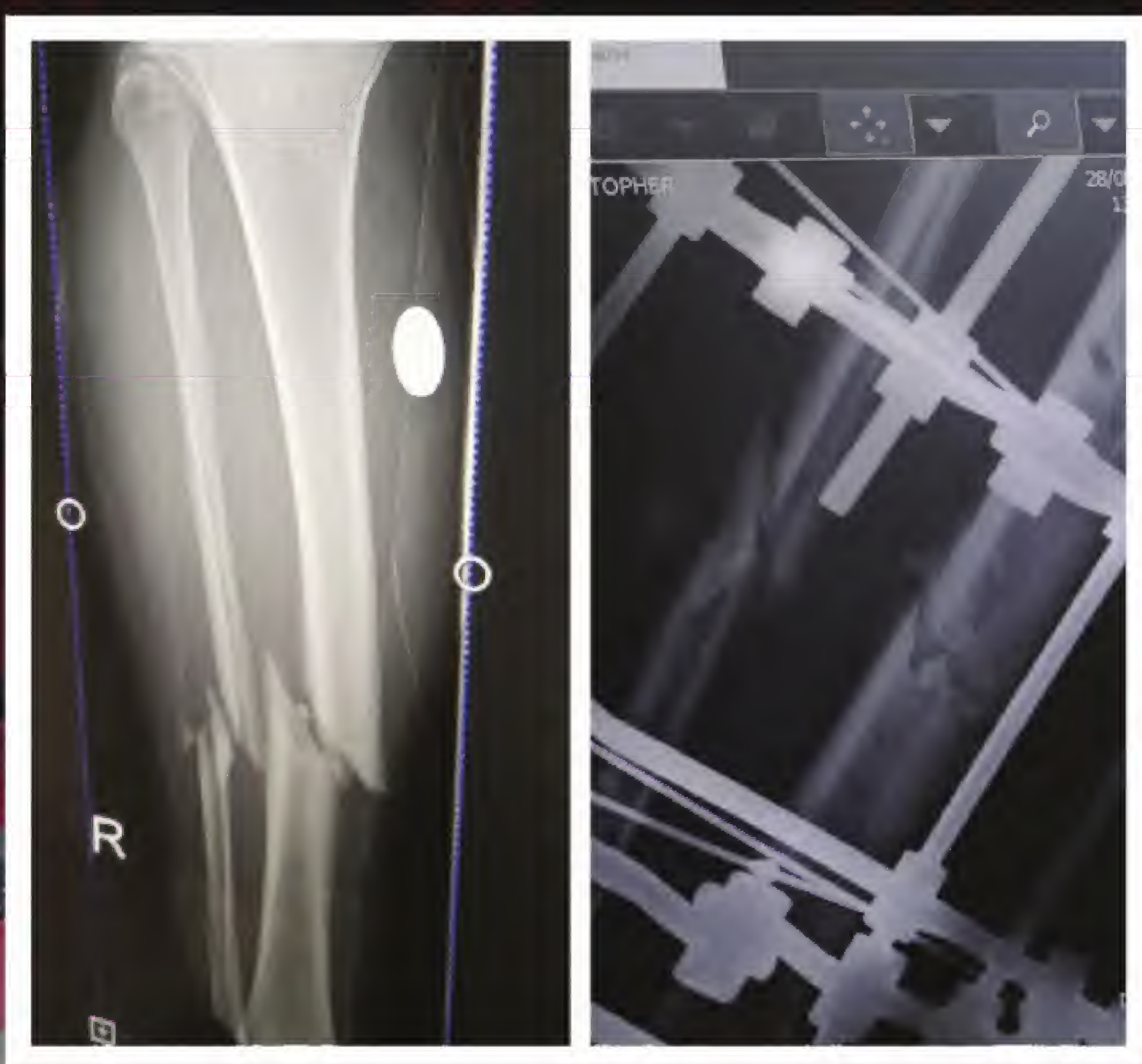
FEATURING PHIL 'TITANIUM' ROBERTS

BY DARREN NICHOLHURST @daz_the_bull

If you saw the previous article with Phil, you were likely horrified at the tragic accident he was subject to, during a live strongman competition. Unfortunately, during an atlas stone event where he was loading the stones onto their platforms, the competition came to an abrupt tragic end when the fourth stone, weighing a ridiculous 160kg, was dropped from his clutch due to cramp.

The stone came hammering down onto his lower leg and shattered it clean in two, in front of a live audience. Thankfully, the medics were there to assist him immediately, and he was carted off to the hospital to start the long, arduous rebuild of one of Britain's most loved strongmen.

PHOTOGRAPHS: JF MEDIA SERVICES





We caught up with Phil *not that he is difficult to catch at the moment* to see how the recovery is going and how long before he is back kicking ass at strongman events.

FLEX: What's it been like going back in the gym after such a sickening accident?

Phil: Going back to the gym was stressful. I had to have someone with me the entire time. I was so unsteady on my feet. I had to have someone pass me everything, my weights, crutches, everything. As time progressed, I needed less and less help. Now, I can easily walk to the dumbbells, grab a weight and walk back to the bench. I stopped using crutches a few weeks ago.

FLEX: Are you managing to do the exercises you need to?

Phil: Obviously, I can't do any strongman training, as it would involve too much standing on my foot. I can do most normal bodybuilding style exercises. As I said, I can't do standing exercises. This is because I don't have the strength or the reflexes in the ankle or foot. If I were to stumble, I can't put my foot out fast enough and stabilise myself to stop me from falling over. So, everything must be seated at the moment. My upper body is starting to increase down to the sheer amount that I'm training it compared to anything lower body wise.

FLEX: Has your consultant been happy with your progress?

Phil: The consultant warned me. He said, "Don't expect hardly any changes in the x-ray at the six-week mark." He noted that the six-week mark would be too soon to see any of the bones fusing or making any marked improvements. But, when they did the x-ray, we were all taken back. The bones had made a significant improvement, and we could visibly see the bones already starting to fuse. The consultant was shocked but pleased at my fast recovery.

FLEX: Mentally, what was it like to feel you have to start from the beginning of your career again?

Phil: I won't lie; it's been hard. Especially once the severity of the accident sunk in, my pride has taken a huge hit. I have lost so much weight, I was 24 stone when I had the accident, and now I am 20 stone. So, I don't feel like I did back then. I look in the mirror and see a complete stranger, and my brain knows that I don't look right, not what I'm used to. I am not as full as I used to be due to the size loss. The biggest shock is people not being as bothered with you. When I was winning shows, there was always a lot of people hanging around me.

It was almost like they were basking in my glory and notoriety. I have lost a couple of friends since the accident. I have since learnt that people are willing to associate with you when you're at the top, but when something happens, and you have nothing to give them, they vanish. This is the most valuable life lesson I've learnt. Those that stay with you when times are hard are your real friends. The hangers-on are not worth my time.

FLEX: What do you think you will feel like when you win your first trophy after you have fully recovered, knowing what you have gone through?

Phil: After having to feel like I'm starting from the beginning and going so far back. That first win will be emotional I'm sure. When you have to work so hard to get somewhere, knowing what a difficult journey you have walked to get there, it makes it even more gratifying and rewarding. I do admit, I will be terrified doing the atlas stones for the first time. But I have to do them. I have done them a thousand times before, and once I get over the fear, I'm sure I won't ever worry again.





FLEX: Have you encountered any problems during the weeks you have been back in the gym?

Phil: Not really. I have found that my confidence in humanity was restored. People stand and wait for me to get through doors while they hold them; everyone wants to help me do the simple tasks we take for granted. And my customers of the gym have been amazing, giving me so much support in every way. It's been eye-opening. I have managed to start personal training again, and my clients are patient and loyal. However, I have recently had an infection, which is a worrying situation. I am still a heavy guy. I have twice the amounts of steel rods going through my leg compared to an average person. So, that means I have twice the amount of chance to get an infection. The last situation I want is to get an infection in the healing bone, as that would cause a huge problem. As soon as I knew I had an infection, my partner got me some antibiotics, and I started to make a marked improvement.

FLEX: You're looking leaner and fitter than you were when we last saw you. Have you been watching your diet?

Phil: Yes, I have. I've been eating healthy and clean and increasing my vegetables and lean meats, reducing my calorie intake. I have also started using more vitamins and minerals and calcium to ensure my bones have everything they need to recover as fast as possible. I was eating 5000 calories a day when I was 24 stone, I have reduced the intake to around 3500 calories, and that is of clean, healthy food. I have learnt a lot from this injury.

FLEX: Do you feel that you will take what you have learned into the next phase of your strongman career?

Phil: I know that when I get back to training for strongman properly, all the knowledge I have picked up to recover better will be taken into creating a stronger, faster athlete. I will be a new better version of myself before I had the accident.



Phil has promised to be back competing at strongman events in 2020, which we know isn't too long away. But we see the determination he has is unstoppable. It takes a real athlete to bounce back as far as he has already, and we know that this injury, is a life lesson for Phil.

We look forward to catching up with Phil once he has his leg cage removed and he is back lifting like the great strongman he was born to be. **FLEX**

Rising Star From The East: YAROSLAV VERBA

Up-and-coming Ukrainian native Yaroslav Verba is tipped for greatness after topping podiums in 2019 back-to-back, so Flex sent in resident columnist Vincent Prado to get the low-down on what makes him tick.

FLEX: Our readers will be very interested to learn more about the strategies you utilised to reach such an outstanding level.

Verba: I'm honoured to be presented to the readers of such a prestigious mag. It is a great pleasure to address a new audience and maybe new fans. I wish all of you great and productive sessions!

RISING STAR

FLEX: 2019 exposed you to the international public, and in a few months your status completely changed!

Verba: Yes, this was an incredible season for me that took me from my provincial town in Ukraine to the world scene! All went exceptionally well and the prep itself went smoothly, with no incidents. It was very exciting to prepare for my first international competitions. The level of athletes I was on stage with was unprecedented to me, but I was ready and won every time.

FLEX: You won two key competitions in May and June 2019. Can you tell us more about these two major events?

Verba: Yes indeed! I competed at the Grand Prix Poland (PCA) on 11th and 12th May, and then at the Olympia Amateur in Alicante, Spain, on 8th and 9th June. The level of athletes and of the competitions themselves was so much higher than I had seen before, particularly at the NPC Amateur Olympia in Alicante. I was shocked by the conditioning of the guys in my category (102kg and over). They were massive and well-prepared, very high-level. When I first saw them, I began to doubt my own quality and I didn't believe, right up until the last moment, that I could win!



PHOTOGRAPHS: NIKOLAY LUKASH



That's why I think it's truly unnecessary to worry about the quality of your competition, because what you see backstage and what the judges see onstage are two totally different things.

FLEX: Tell us a bit about your background and stats?

Verba: I was born on 7th October 1995 in the Ukraine where I stayed until recently upping sticks to Kharkov, with plans to move to Kiev this summer. I'm 23 and have been training since the age of 14. Before that I played basketball and participated in rowing and boxing. I always played sport, and I was never skinny. I am 190 cm, my offseason weight is about 130 kg, and I go to 114-116 kg to get a good, dry condition. My bicep size is 55 cm, my thighs are 82 cm and my waist is 80 cm.

FLEX: What inspired you to pump iron?

Verba: I started to lift weights when I was 14, and since then trained more and more seriously. Like everyone, I admired movie stars like Arnold, Sylvester Stallone and Jean-Claude Van Damme, anyone with muscularity. I always liked to see athletic people with a great and developed physical condition. When I started to train with a good friend of mine, I remember thinking for his age, that he looked very good and was quite big; I was impressed by him! I immediately liked training and I understood that I wanted to progress in this sport.

FLEX: What is it about bodybuilding that appeals to you over other sports?

Verba: What I like in our sport is that you don't need to make performances in running or swimming to show your physical abilities. Bodybuilding is 24/ 24 and 7/ 7. My appearance demonstrates my sport without words, people see me and know that I am committed to bodybuilding.

FLEX: You're known for saying that there is a big difference between appearance and condition. What do you mean by that?

Verba: Yes, bodybuilding is all about condition and not simply appearance. It is an extremely demanding sport; therefore, it is a sport of passion and soul. Everything must be thoughtout and balanced, because bodybuilding is not a short sprint but a marathon that you need to commit to for a long time.

TRAIN INSANE

FLEX: What's your training philosophy?

Verba: I have very different techniques that other bodybuilders don't have but I am very strict on two

principles: a good execution of movements and to work with heavy weights. An example of the heavy weight training I do is bicep curl with 100 kg for 12-15 repetitions and then I have 8 repetitions with 110 kg. Or I squat with 260 kg for 12 repetitions, and then 280 kg for 6-8 reps, also I load 700 kg on the leg press, and I bench press 10 reps at 160 kg. I do think I was gifted with very good genetics though.

FLEX: What is your training split?

Verba: My split is always the same, regardless of being in prep or in off-season: back/ chest/ shoulders/ rest / legs / arms / rest. But the fact that my split doesn't change doesn't mean that my trainings are alike. Of course, I change the movements and the way they're executed often.

FLEX: Do you vary intensity too?

Verba: Indeed, I use the periodisation method, meaning I train my muscles differently and cover the whole muscle training potential, such as contractile power, glycolysis, oxidative function, and pumping. Therefore, I perform workouts both intensively and with heavy weights, periodically.

FLEX: Do you have any favourite exercises or favourite muscle groups to train?

Verba: I like all exercises present in my training split, but if I must choose, I'll say bicep curls, triceps extensions, squats, and shoulder elevations. As for the muscle groups, I really enjoy training all muscle groups, seeing progression only enhances my love for what I do!

FLEX: How would you describe the evolution of your training techniques over the years?

Verba: I improved the intensity of my training. I rest less now during workouts, and I feel stronger, which gives me the opportunity to better concentrate on good execution of the movements.

DIET OF CHAMPS

FLEX: How important is diet to develop such a fantastic physique?

Verba: I am very consistent in my diet year-round as I don't want to endure abrupt changes. My nutrition it is all about gradual additions or reductions of food products, and respect of the necessary balance between macronutrients.



PHOTOGRAPHS: NIKOLAY LUKASH

FLEX: How did you prepare this season?

Verba: This season it only took me five weeks to prep, last season it was 8 weeks and before then even earlier; 10 weeks. It seems that I get into my best shape and condition more and more quickly every time. In general, I do not follow a specific diet, or regimen, I only try to have a very large range of food, and of course I follow a strict balance of my intake of calories, protein, carbohydrates, etc.

FLEX: Do you have any personal adaptations of these general principles?

Verba: I try to be in competitive condition a little earlier than necessary, which helps me to avoid extremes, and helps not to make drastic cuts in carbohydrates or fat. I don't suffer during the diet-drying period, I feel quite normal and I think that those who die on diets before competitions are just guys who have not understood their body and should learn from more experienced athletes. All year round I supplement with ANS PERFORMANCE and use Country Life brands in my off-season. They have a large choice of products, including amino acids and vitamins, minerals, protein, pre-training complexes, omega-3 and special supplements for the heart, joints, and stomach.

PROJECTS

FLEX: You're a very ambitious bodybuilder! Do you have a lot of other projects too?

Verba: My plans are to move to our capital city, Kiev, to find good housing and cement my career as a coach. Speaking globally, after moving I immediately start preparing for the next season of IFBB Pro league competitions. Long-term, I am thinking of moving to the United States, as I understand that living in the US increases the chances of being part of the Mr. Olympia competition!

FLEX: Eastern Europe has provided some bodybuilding greats and you represent the new generation of Eastern muscle. You asked to shout out some of your friends from the Ukrainian bodybuilding world...

Verba: Thank you so much for this fantastic opportunity to be in contact with the UK fans. There are many talented bodybuilders in the Ukraine, guys whose names have not yet graced the world stage; Roman Yushchenko, Kirill Khudaev, Vladislav Sukhoruchko, Bogdan Koshman, Yura Sologub, these are our young and promising athletes who will give some heat to the most prestigious competitions in the world in the near future. **FLEX**

Facebook: Yaroslav Verba

Instagram: @yaroslav_verba_ifbbpro

**MUSCLE
& FITNESS UK**

HOT BOD

PHOTOGRAPH BY:
BLUELINEEFEX
www.BlueLineEfex.com
[@bluelineefex](https://www.instagram.com/bluelineefex)

VITAL STATS

NAME: Jade Douglas-Hiley

FROM: Los Angeles (living in San Diego)

AGE: 25

OCCUPATION: IFBB bikini pro & fitness model

ACHIEVEMENTS: Receiving my IFBB
bikini pro card

HOBBIES: Hanging out with my boxer dog

INSTAGRAM: @jadedouglashileyfit

BEFORE



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PANTILES CLINIC

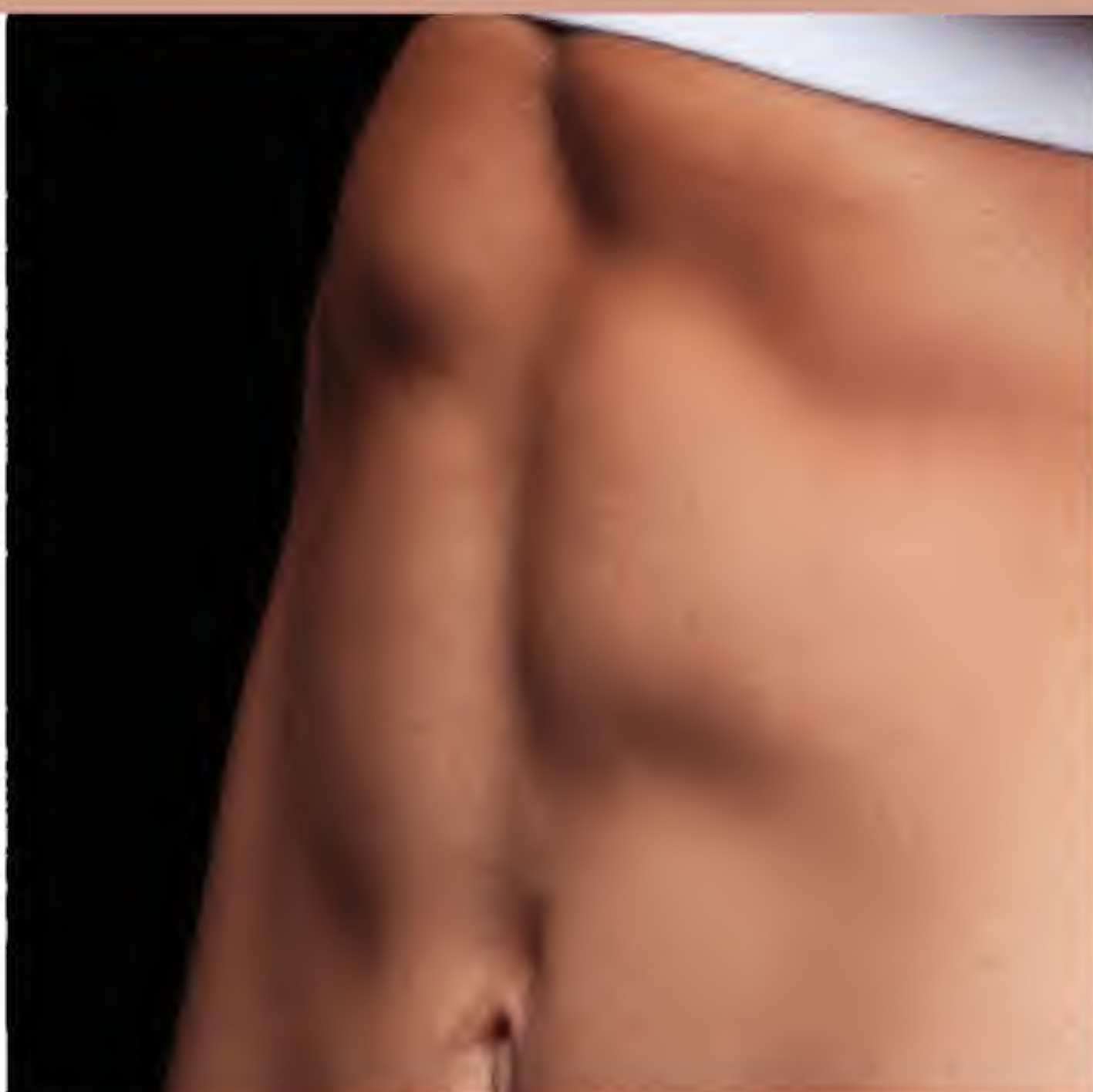
VASER

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“

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Melissa, 43



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